

BERWICKSHIRE EDUCATION COMMITTEE. COUNTY LIBRARY.

Readers are requested to take great care of the books while in their possession, and to point out any defect that they may observe in them to the Librarian.

All books should be returned to the Library within 14 days from the date of issue; but an extension of the period of loan will be granted when desired, if the book has not been requested by another reader. For detention beyond 14 days a fine of one penny for each week or portion of a week will be charged.

Immediate notice is to be given to the Librarian of loss of book and of change of address.

In the event of infectious disease occurring, books should be handed to the Officer of the Sanitary Authority, *not* returned to the Library.

Readers are reminded that the special resources of the Central Library, Dunfermline, are available to them. Applications for books from the Central Library should be made to the County Librarian, Duns.

The Headquarters Library, Duns, is open at the following hours :—

MONDAY	10-5 and 6-7.	THURSDAY	10-5.
TUESDAY	10-5.	FRIDAY	10-5 and 6-7.
WEDNESDAY	10-5.	SATURDAY	10-12.

31198



EVERYMAN'S LIBRARY
EDITED BY ERNEST RHYS

ESSAYS AND
BELLES LETTRES

THE TWO BOYHOODS
AND OTHER CHAPTERS AND
PASSAGES ON LIFE AND ART
BY JOHN RUSKIN

THE PUBLISHERS OF *EVERYMAN'S*
LIBRARY WILL BE PLEASED TO SEND
FREELY TO ALL APPLICANTS A LIST
OF THE PUBLISHED AND PROJECTED
VOLUMES TO BE COMPRISED UNDER
THE FOLLOWING THIRTEEN HEADINGS:

TRAVEL ☙ SCIENCE ☙ FICTION
THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY
HISTORY ☙ CLASSICAL
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
ESSAYS ☙ ORATORY
POETRY & DRAMA
BIOGRAPHY
REFERENCE
ROMANCE



IN FOUR STYLES OF BINDING: CLOTH,
FLAT BACK, COLOURED TOP; LEATHER,
ROUND CORNERS, GILT TOP; LIBRARY
BINDING IN CLOTH, & QUARTER PIGSKIN

LONDON: J. M. DENT & SONS, LTD.
NEW YORK: E. P. DUTTON & CO.



MOST
CURRENT
• FOR THAT
THEY COME
HOME TO
MEN'S
BUSINESS
& BOSOMS
LORD BACON

*The TWO BOY-
HOODS, and
OTHER SELECT
PASSAGES by
JOHN RUSKIN*



LONDON: PUBLISHED
by J. M. DENT & SONS, LTD
AND IN NEW YORK
BY E. P. DUTTON & CO.

31198

82486

INTRODUCTION

It is fitting that a book of Ruskin, opening with the boyhoods of two of his masters in art, Giorgione and Turner, should take some account of his own boyhood. He was very much the creature, as most imaginative people are, of his own earlier days, and when he tells us in *Præterita* how his likes and his mind and character were formed, while he was still in the charge of a fond and stern father and mother, we already trace in him the qualities that marked him afterwards for good and all.

The painting of two blue hills into the background of his own portrait as a little boy, at his special request, is a fact that one remembers in this chronicle, as he said—"a fact sufficiently curious." The blue hills meant that he had a Scottish horizon beyond his London walls, and that his thoughts ran more on the hills than on the gooseberry bushes of his aunt's garden on Tayside. The feeling for hills sprang in him early indeed, and two verses sung by his nurse, which ended with "mountains so blue," became the first stave of his life-song. The other side of him is represented in the pages that tell of his mother, and how she looked upon him as a dedicated spirit, to be vowed to God from the very beginning. The sermon he preached at four years old with an iteration of "People be dood," and the removal to the house at Herne Hill which we commonly associate with him, are two other momentous events in this inductive history. He was a precocious little fellow, as became the child of his serious, God-fearing father and mother, with no small fellow-urchins to encourage him in mischief. He led, at this time, he says, "a very small, perky, contented, conceited Cock-Robinson-Crusoe sort of life," with himself as the centre of the universe, if not its *primum mobile*.

The Herne Hill house counted to him as a memory for

life. He described it as three-storied, and having from its garret-windows (which made another story in the roof) a fine view of the Norwood hills on one side and the Thames valley on the other, "with Windsor telescopically clear in the distance." The winter sunrise over the Norwood hills, and the summer sunset with Harrow hill against it, give the wider vista; and the long back garden with its trees, pear and apple, cherry and mulberry, and its gooseberry and currant hedge, makes up the nearer picture. The fruit was forbidden to the boy, and the rule of the house and the garden was spartan compared to that by which most youngsters are bound to-day. To the portraits of his father, the wine-merchant, famous for his good sherry, and his mother in a gardening dress, must be added the queer vignette of the little boy indoors. In this he appears sitting solitary in a recess of the drawing-room, like "an Idol in a niche," listening to the Waverley Novels. Scott and the Bible are two of the chief factors in the story; but Pope and his *Homer*, and Byron and other poets, with Marryat's, Fenimore Cooper's and other novels, succeed. And then we come to the history of his first exact unimpulsive efforts to draw and learn drawing—his copying "with great and to most people now incredible exactness, Cruikshank's illustrations to Grimm," being, perhaps, the most notable detail. His first sketch-book, with sketches of Dover and Tunbridge castles, the main tower of Canterbury Cathedral, and Battle Abbey, shows how early his architectural sense began to quicken: he was between ten and eleven then. A visit to Matlock recalls his "subterranean passion," common to most boys, and his first studies in mineralogy, not so common a taste, at least in the degree with which he pursued it. He describes afterwards, in the chapter entitled "Parnassus and Plynlimmon," that tells of a climb from Llanberis up Snowdon, "the finding for the first time in my life a real 'mineral' for myself—a piece of copper pyrites." He pauses to regret the lost chance that might have made of him the first geologist of his time in Europe, "if only my father and mother had seen the real strength and weakness of their little John," and given him a shaggy Welsh pony and left him in charge of a good Welsh guide and his wife. In-

stead, they took him back to London and a riding school in Moorfields, where he regularly fell off the big horses' backs—for he was clearly not born to be a horseman.

From these adventures, we must pass to those abroad which gave him his foretaste of the scenes that became afterwards knitted up with his life and life-work—Schaffhausen, the Schwartzwald and the first Swiss cottage. And so to Italy.

This was the boy's real initiation. A more blessed entrance into life for one of his temperament, he said, could not have been: seeing that he was a child of his time, to whom mountains had become places of beauty and delight. So "in perfect health and fire of heart," content to be the boy that he was, prepared by what he had already learnt of Turner (from Rogers' *Italy*), to receive the vision of the Alps in their revelation of the beauty of the earth, he walked that first evening the garden-terrace of Schaffhausen with his destiny fixed. To that terrace and the Lake of Geneva, as he said more than fifty years later, his heart and his faith returned with every impulse that was nobly alive, every thought of help or of peace.

But leading up to these scenes abroad, and the first sight of the Alps, are those that have been mentioned at home. Herne Hill, Croydon, the springs of Wandel, the banks of Tay, Matlock, Plynlmmon, Dover, Plymouth—these are all worked into his austere, unusual, and richly provided boyish experience, lived in the care of his remarkable father and mother. Denied the easy pleasures of other children, forbidden toys and the common follies with which elders like to cheapen the child's imagination, but obliged in other ways to forego, too, the natural perils and the healthy recklessness of a small boy, he had to make out his own solace. He studied the light in the pools of the Tay, and in the "flowing diamond" of its stream, as he did the "sable opacity" of the old pond on Camberwell Green. This pond with its elm tree, from whose boughs, it was reported, a wicked boy had fallen one Sunday (and the soul of him into a deeper pool), ranges itself with other watersides and pools in the gazetteer of regretted places in his memory. In *The Queen of the Air*, it will be remembered how he speaks again of the change and

the desecration of beloved scenes that he had known. He was writing at Vevay:

"This first day of May, 1869, I am writing where my work was begun thirty-five years ago,—within sight of the snows of the higher Alps. In that half of the permitted life of man, I have seen strange evil brought upon every scene that I best loved, or tried to make beloved by others. The light which once flushed those pale summits with its rose at dawn, and purple at sunset, is now umbered and faint; the air which once inlaid the clefts of all their golden crags with azure is now defiled with languid coils of smoke, belched from worse than volcanic fires; their very glacier waves are ebbing, and their snows fading, as if Hell had breathed on them; the waters that once sank at their feet into crystalline rest are now dimmed and foul, from deep to deep and shore to shore. These are no careless words—they are accurately—horribly—true. I know what the Swiss lakes were; no pool of Alpine fountain at its source was clearer. This morning, on the Lake of Geneva, at half a mile from the beach, I could scarcely see my oar-blade a fathom deep.

"The light, the air, the waters, all defiled! How of the earth itself? Take this one fact for type of honour done by the modern Swiss to the earth of his native land. There used to be a little rock at the end of the avenue by the port of Neuchâtel; there, the last marble of the foot of Jura, sloping to the blue water, and (at this time of year) covered with bright pink tufts of *Saponaria*. I went, three days since, to gather a blossom at the place. The goodly native rock and its flowers were covered with the dust and refuse of the town; but, in the middle of the avenue, was a newly-constructed artificial rockery, with a fountain twisted through a spinning spout, and an inscription on one of its loose-tumbled stones:

" 'AUX BOTANISTES,
LE CLUB JURASSIQUE.' "

"Ah, masters of modern science, give me back my Athena out of your vials, and seal, if it may be, once more, Asmodeus therein. You have divided the elements, and united them; enslaved them upon the earth, and dis-

cerned them in the stars. Teach us, now, but this of them, which is all that man need know,—that the Air is given to him for his life; and the Rain to his thirst, and for his baptism; and the Fire for warmth; and the Sun for sight; and the Earth for his meat—and his Rest.”

But this is not the book of Ruskin's regrets. It is one to show the delights and the powers that came to him as he went on, and built up his house of thought, and filled his regions gradually with the things he had first loved on the banks of Tay or Thames. It is one to give vision to any eyes that like his own are trained on beauty, and the things that are constructive, and alive and strong, and that make for human happiness and the something more beyond. And its last office is to send its readers on to the books from which its pages are detached—to *Modern Painters*, *The Stones of Venice*, *Præterita*, and the rest.

The following is a list of Ruskin's published works:—

Ruskin's first printed writings were contributions to the Magazine of Natural History, 1834-36, and poems in *Friendship's Offering*, 1835, Oxford prize poem, Salsette and Elephanta, 1839.

Modern Painters, Vol. I., 1843; second edition, 1844; third edition, 1846—later ones followed; Vol. II., 1846; Vol. III., 1856; Vol. IV., 1856; Vol. V., 1860. Selections from *Modern Painters* have been published under the titles of *Fronde Agrestes*, 1875; *In Montibus Sanctis*, 1884; *Coeli Enarrant*, 1885.

Seven Lamps of Architecture, 1849; second edition, 1855. *The Scythian Guest*, 1849 (from *Friendship's Offering*); *Poems*, 1850 (from *Friendship's Offering*, *Amaranth*, *London Monthly Miscellany*, *Keepsake*, *Heath's Book of Beauty*, with others not previously printed). *Stones of Venice*, Vol. I., 1851; second edition, 1858; Vol. II., 1853; second edition, 1867; Vol. III., 1853; second edition, 1867. *The King of the Golden River*, 1851; *Notes on the Construction of Sheepfolds*, 1851; *Examples of the Architecture of Venice*, 1851; *Pre-Raphaelitism*, 1851; *The National Gallery*, 1852; *GiOTTO and his works in Padua*, 3 parts, 1853, 1854, 1860; *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, 1854, 1855; *The Opening of the Crystal Palace*, 1854; *Pamphlet for the preservation of Ancient Buildings and Landmarks*, 1854; *Notes on the Royal Academy*, No. I., 1855 (three editions); No. II., 1856 (six editions); No. III. (four editions), 1857 (two editions); Nos. IV., V., and VI., 1858, 1859, 1875; *The Harbours of England*, 1856, 1857, 1859; *Notes on the Turner Gallery at Marlborough House*, 1856-67 (several editions in 1857); *Catalogue of the Turner Sketches in the National Gallery*, 1857 (two editions); *Catalogue of Turner's Drawings*, 1857-58; *The Elements of Drawing*, 1857 (two editions); *The Political Economy of Art*, 1857, published in 1880 as *A Joy for Ever*; *Inaugural Addresses at the Cambridge School of Art*, 1858; *The Geology of Chamouni*, 1858; *The Oxford Museum*, 1859; *The Unity of Art*, 1859; *The Two Paths*, 1859; *Elements of*

Perspective, 1859; Tree Twigs, 1861; Catalogue of Turner Drawings presented to the Fitzwilliam Museum, 1861; Unto this Last, 1862 (from the *Cornhill Magazine*); Forms of the Stratified Alps of Savoy, 1863; Of Queens' Gardens, 1864; Sesame and Lilies, 1865 (two editions); The Ethics of the Dust, 1866; The Crown of Wild Olive, 1866 (two editions); War, 1866; Time and Tide, 1867; Leoni, a legend of Italy, 1868 (from *Friendship's Offering*); Notes on the Employment of the Destitute and Criminal Classes, 1868; References to Paintings in illustration of Flamboyant Architecture, 1869; The Mystery of Life and its Arts (afternoon lectures), 1869; The Queen of the Air, 1869 (two editions); The Future of England, 1870; Samuel Prout, 1870 (from *The Art Journal*); Verona and its Rivers, 1870; Lectures on Art, 1870; Drawings and Photographs illustrative of the Architecture of Verona, 1870; Fors Clavigera, 1871-84; Munera Pulveris, 1872; Aratra Pentelici, 1872; Instructions in Elementary Drawing, 1872; The Relation between Michael Angelo and Tintoret, 1872; The Eagle's Nest, 1872; Monuments of the Cavalli Family, 1872; The Nature and Authority of Miracle (from the *Contemporary Review*), 1873; Val D'Arno, 1874; Mornings in Florence (in parts), 1875-77; Proserpina (in parts), 1875-86; Vol. I., 1879; Deucalion (in parts), 1875-83; Vol. I., 1879; Vol. II. (two parts only), 1880, 1883; Ariadne Florentina, 1876; Letters to the *Times* on Pre-Raphaelite Pictures in the Exhibition of 1854, 1876; Yewdale and its Streamlets, 1877; St. Mark's Rest (three parts), 1877-79, 1884; Guide to Pictures in the Academy of Arts, Venice, 1877; Notes on the Turner Exhibition, 1878; The Laws of Fésolé (four parts, 1877-78), 1879; Notes on the Prout and Hunt Exhibition, 1879-80; Circular respecting the Memorial Studies at St. Mark's, 1879-80; Letters to the Clergy (Lord's Prayer and the Church), 1879, 1880; Arrows of the Chace, 2 vols., 1880; Elements of English Prosody, 1880; The Bible of Amiens, 1884 (first published in parts); Love's Meinie (Lectures delivered at Oxford, 1873-81), 1881; Catalogue of Drawings and Sketches by Turner in the National Gallery, 1881; Catalogue of Silicious Minerals at St. David's School, Reigate, 1883; The Art of England, 1884 (originally published as separate lectures); The Storm Cloud of the Nineteenth Century, 1884; Catalogue of Specimens of Silica in the British Museum, 1884; Catalogue of Minerals given to Kirkcudbright Museum, 1884; The Pleasures of England (Lectures delivered), 1844-45; On the Old Road, contributions to Periodical Literature, 2 vols., 1885; Præterita, 3 vols., 1885-89; Dilecta, 1886-87; Hortus Inclusus, 1887; Ruskiniana, 1890-92; Poems (Complete edition), 1891; Poetry of Architecture, 1892 (from the *Architectural Magazine*).

Stray Letters to a London Bibliophile, 1892; Letters upon Subjects of General Interest to various Correspondents, 1892; Letters to William Ward, 1893; Letters addressed to a College Friend, 1894; Separate Collections of Letters, edited by T. J. Wise, were published 1894, 1895, 1896, and 1897; Letters to Charles Eliot Norton, edited by C. E. Norton, 1897; Lectures on Landscape, 1897; Letters to Mary and Helen Gladstone, 1903.

Works, in eleven volumes, 1871-83; Library Edition, edited by E. T. Cook and A. Wedderburn, 1903, etc.

For Life, see W. G. Collingwood: John Ruskin, a Biographical Outline, 1889; Life and Work of John Ruskin, 1893; Life of John Ruskin, 1900; Frederic Harrison; Englishmen of Letters, 1902.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE TWO BOYHOODS	1
TURNER'S SEA PAINTING	13
TURNER'S SALISBURY PLAIN	18
THE RAIN CLOUD	19
THE DARK CLOUD	26
MOUNTAINS	27
THE GLACIER	38
THE HESPERIDES	38
THE CLOUD-CHARIOTS—	
1. The Heaped Cloud	42
2. The Mountain Cloud	43
CLOUDS AND MOUNTAINS, AND MODERN PAINTERS	44
THE DARK AND BRIGHT AGES	46
THE CLOUD-BALANCINGS	47
THE WHITE CLOUD	49
THE GRASS	50
NATURE AND THE CHILD	52
THE MONTHS	54
BOOKS	55
BOOKS AND WORDS	57
WORDS	59
DANTE'S MOUNTAIN SCENERY	59
THE HILLS OF CARRARA	63
RAINBOWS AND LIBERTY	65
AN ALPINE GARLAND—	
1. The Alps seen from Marengo	67
2. Mount Blanc Revisited	68
3. The Arve at Cluse	69
4. Mont Blanc	70
5. Written Among the Basses Alpes	71
6. A Walk in Chamouni	72
THE CRYSTAL ORDERS	75
"OH, LADY QUEEN"	80
CRYSTAL QUARRELS	81
CRYSTAL VIRTUES	85
THE LEGEND OF ST. BARBARA	86

	PAGE
ST. CECILIA'S SHRINE	94
THE CASTLE OF AMBOISE	98
THE VOICE	99
LA MADONNA DELL' ACQUA	100
NATURE AND ART	101
THE TWO PATHS	103
EDUCATION	104
THE RULE OF THE GREATEST	105
FRESH AIR, GOOD LIVING, AND A PANTOMIME	110
MEN AND TOOLS	113
WORK AND WORKMEN	117
DECORATION	121
ANIMAL PAINTERS AND PICTURES OF DOGS	122
IMAGINATION AND FANCY	126
THE OLD WATER-WHEEL	128
ELEMENTS OF DRAWING—	
1. Reflected Light	129
2. Light on Water	131
3. On Clouds	133
4. Colour Note-Books	135
5. On Clear Colour	137
6. On Colour Tones	138
7. The Growth of Trees	141
8. The Tree's History	142
9. Rivers and Bridges	145
10. On Turner's " Heysham "	146
VENICE—	
1. Venice	150
2. Torcello	158
ST. MARK'S	165
THE LEGEND OF THE BRIDES OF VENICE	174
THE BRIDES OF VENICE, by Samuel Rogers	179
THE BATTLE OF MONTENOTTE	182
THE LAMP OF MEMORY	189
THE VIRTUES OF ARCHITECTURE	191
GOthic ARCHITECTURE	165
THE MOUNTAIN SUNSET	196



JOHN RUSKIN

THE TWO BOYHOODS

§ 1. BORN half-way between the mountains and the sea—that young George of Castelfranco—of the Brave Castle:—Stout George they called him, George of Georges, so goodly a boy he was—Giorgione.

Have you ever thought what a world his eyes opened on—fair, searching eyes of youth? What a world of mighty life, from those mountain roots to the shore;—of loveliest life, when he went down, yet so young, to the marble city—and became himself as a fiery heart to it?

A city of marble, did I say? nay, rather a golden city, paved with emerald. For truly, every pinnacle and turret glanced or glowed, overlaid with gold, or bossed with jasper. Beneath, the unsullied sea drew in deep breathing, to and fro, its eddies of green wave. Deep-hearted, majestic, terrible as the sea,—the men of Venice moved in sway of power and war; pure as her pillars of alabaster, stood her mothers and maidens; from foot to brow, all noble, walked her knights; the low bronzed gleaming of sea-rusted armour shot angrily under their blood-red mantle-folds. Fearless, faithful, patient, impenetrable, implacable—every word a fate—sate her senate. In hope and honour, lulled by flowing of wave around their isles of sacred sand, each with his name written and the cross graved at his side, lay her dead. A wonderful piece of world. Rather, itself a world. It lay along the face of the waters, no larger, as its captains saw it from their masts at evening, than a bar of sunset that could not pass away; but for its power, it must have seemed to them as if they were sailing in the expanse of heaven, and this a great planet, whose orient edge widened through ether. A world from which all ignoble care and petty thoughts were banished, with all the common and poor

elements of life. No foulness, nor tumult, in those tremulous streets, that filled, or fell, beneath the moon; but rippled music of majestic change, or thrilling silence. No weak walls could rise above them; no low-roofed cottage, nor straw-built shed. Only the strength as of rock, and the finished setting of stones most precious. And around them, far as the eye could reach, still the soft moving of stainless waters, proudly pure; as not the flower, so neither the thorn nor the thistle, could grow in the glancing fields. Ethereal strength of Alps, dream-like, vanishing in high procession beyond the Torcellan shore; blue islands of Paduan hills, poised in the golden west. Above, free winds and fiery clouds ranging at their will;—brightness out of the north, and balm from the south, and the stars of the evening and morning clear in the limitless light of arched heaven and circling sea.

Such was Giorgione's school—such Titian's home.

§ 2. Near the south-west corner of Covent Garden, a square brick pit or well is formed by a closet-set block of houses, to the back windows of which it admits a few rays of light. Access to the bottom of it is obtained out of Maiden Lane, through a low archway and an iron gate; and if you stand long enough under the archway to accustom your eyes to the darkness, you may see on the left hand a narrow door, which formerly gave quiet access to a respectable barber's shop, of which the front window, looking into Maiden Lane, is still extant, filled in this year (1860) with a row of bottles, connected, in some defunct manner, with a brewer's business. A more fashionable neighbourhood, it is said, eighty years ago than now—never certainly a cheerful one—wherein a boy being born on St. George's day, 1775, began soon after to take interest in the world of Covent Garden, and put to service such spectacles of life as it afforded.

§ 3. No knights to be seen there, nor, I imagine, many beautiful ladies; their costume at least disadvantageous, depending much on incumbency of hat and feather, and short waists; the majesty of men founded similarly on shoe-buckles and wigs;—impressive enough when Reynolds will do his best for it; but not suggestive of much ideal delight to a boy.

“Bello ovile dov'io dormii agnello;” of things beautiful,

besides men and women, dusty sunbeams up or down the street on summer mornings; deep furrowed cabbage leaves at the greengrocer's; magnificence of oranges in wheelbarrows round the corner; and Thames' shore within three minutes' race.

§ 4. None of these things very glorious; the best, however, that England, it seems, was then able to provide for a boy of gift; who, such as they are, loves them—never, indeed, forgets them. The short waists modify to the last his visions of Greek ideal. His foregrounds had always a succulent cluster or two of greengrocery at the corners. Enchanted oranges gleam in Covent Gardens of the Hesperides; and great ships go to pieces in order to scatter chests of them on the waves. That mist of early sunbeams in the London dawn crosses, many and many a time, the clearness of Italian air; and by Thames' shore, with its stranded barges and glidings of red sail, dearer to us than Lucerne lake or Venetian lagoon,—by Thames' shore we will die.

§ 5. With such circumstance round him in youth, let us note what necessary effects followed upon the boy. I assume him to have had the Giorgione's sensibility (and more than Giorgione's, if that be possible) to colour and form. I tell you farther, and this fact you may receive trustfully, that his sensibility to human affection and distress was no less keen than even his sense for natural beauty—heart-sight deep as eye-sight.

Consequently, he attaches himself with the faithfulest child-love to everything that bears an image of the place he was born in. No matter how ugly it is,—has it anything about it like Maiden Lane, or like Thames' shore? If so, it shall be painted for their sake. Hence, to the very close of life, Turner could endure ugliness which no one else, of the same sensibility, would have borne with for an instant. Dead brick walls, blank square windows, old clothes, market-womanly types of humanity—anything fishy and muddy, like Billingsgate or Hungerford Market, had great attraction for him; black barges, patched sails, and every possible condition of fog.

§ 6. You will find these tolerations and affections guiding or sustaining him to the last hour of his life; the notablest of all such endurances being that of dirt. No Venetian

ever draws anything foul; but Turner devoted picture after picture to the illustration of effects of dinginess, smoke, soot, dust, and dusty texture; old sides of boats, weedy roadside vegetation, dung-hills, straw-yards, and all the soilings and stains of every common labour.

And more than this, he not only could endure, but enjoyed and looked for *litter*, like Covent Garden wreck after the market. His pictures are often full of it, from side to side; their foregrounds differ from all others in the natural way that things have of lying about in them. Even his richest vegetation, in ideal work, is confused; and he delights in shingle, débris, and heaps of fallen stones. The last words he ever spoke to me about a picture were in gentle exultation about his St. Gothard: "that *litter* of stones which I endeavoured to represent."

§ 7. The second great result of this Covent Garden training was, understanding of and regard for the poor, whom the Venetians, we saw, despised; whom, contrarily, Turner loved, and more than loved—understood. He got no romantic sight of them, but an infallible one, as he prowled about the end of his lane, watching night effects in the wintry streets; nor sight of the poor alone, but of the poor in direct relations with the rich. He knew, in good and evil, what both classes thought of, and how they dealt with, each other.

Reynolds and Gainsborough, bred in country villages, learned there the country boy's reverential theory of "the squire," and kept it. They painted the squire and the squire's lady as centres of the movements of the universe, to the end of their lives. But Turner perceived the younger squire in other aspects about his lane, occurring prominently in its night scenery, as a dark figure, or one of two, against the moonlight. He saw also the working of city commerce, from endless warehouse, towering over Thames, to the back shop in the lane, with its stale herrings—highly interesting these last; one of his father's best friends, whom he often afterwards visited affectionately at Bristol, being a fishmonger and glueboiler; which gives us a friendly turn of mind towards herring-fishing, whaling, Calais, poissardes, and many other of our choicest subjects in after life; all this being connected with that mysterious forest below London

Bridge on one side;—and, on the other, with these masses of human power and national wealth which weigh upon us, at Covent Garden here, with strange compression, and crush us into narrow Hand Court.

§ 8. “That mysterious forest below London Bridge”—better for the boy than wood of pine, or grove of myrtle. How he must have tormented the watermen, beseeching them to let him crouch anywhere in the bows, quiet as a log, so only that he might get floated down there among the ships, and round and round the ships, and with the ships, and by the ships, and under the ships, staring, and clambering;—these the only quite beautiful things he can see in all the world, except the sky; but these, when the sun is on their sails, filling or falling, endlessly disordered by sway of tide and stress of anchorage, beautiful unspeakably; which ships also are inhabited by glorious creatures—red-faced sailors, with pipes, appearing over the gunwales, true knights, over their castle parapets—the most angelic beings in the whole compass of London world. And Trafalgar happening long before we can draw ships, we nevertheless coax all current stories out of the wounded sailors, do our best at present to show Nelson’s funeral streaming up the Thames; and vow that Trafalgar shall have its tribute of memory some day. Which, accordingly, is accomplished — once, with all our might, for its death; twice, with all our might, for its victory; thrice, in pensive farewell to the old Temeraire, and, with it, to that order of things.

§ 9. Now this fond companying with sailors must have divided his time, it appears to me, pretty equally between Covent Garden and Wapping (allowing for incidental excursions to Chelsea on one side, and Greenwich on the other), which time he would spend pleasantly, but not magnificently, being limited in pocket-money, and leading a kind of “Poor-Jack” life on the river.

In some respects, no life could be better for a lad. But it was not calculated to make his ear fine to the niceties of language, nor form his moralities on an entirely regular standard. Picking up his first scraps of vigorous English chiefly at Deptford and in the markets, and his first ideas of female tenderness and beauty among nymphs of the barge and the barrow—another boy might, perhaps, have become

what people usually term "vulgar." But the original make and frame of Turner's mind being not vulgar, but as nearly as possible a combination of the minds of Keats and Dante, joining capricious waywardness, and intense openness to every fine pleasure of sense, and hot defiance of formal precedent, with a quite infinite tenderness, generosity, and desire of justice and truth—this kind of mind did not become vulgar, but very tolerant of vulgarity, even fond of it in some forms; and, on the outside, visibly infected by it, deeply enough; the curious result, in its combination of elements, being to most people wholly incomprehensible. It was as if a cable had been woven of blood-crimson silk, and then tarred on the outside. People handled it, and the tar came off on their hands; red gleams were seen through the black, underneath, at the places where it had been strained. Was it ochre?—said the world—or red lead?

§ 10. Schooled thus in manners, literature, and general moral principles at Chelsea and Wapping, we have finally to inquire concerning the most important point of all. We have seen the principal differences between this boy and Giorgione, as respects sight of the beautiful, understanding of poverty, of commerce, and of order of battle; then follows another cause of difference in our training—not slight—the aspect of religion, namely, in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. I say the aspect; for that was all the lad could judge by. Disposed, for the most part, to learn chiefly by his eyes, in this special matter he finds there is really no other way of learning. His father taught him to "lay one penny upon another." Of mother's teaching, we hear of none; of parish pastoral teaching, the reader may guess how much.

§ 11. I chose Giorgione rather than Veronese to help me in carrying out this parallel; because I do not find in Giorgione's work any of the early Venetian monachist element. He seems to me to have belonged more to an abstract contemplative school. I may be wrong in this; it is no matter;—suppose it were so, and that he came down to Venice somewhat recusant, or insentient, concerning the usual priestly doctrines of his day,—how would the Venetian religion, from an outer intellectual standing point, have *looked* to him?

§ 12. He would have seen it to be a religion indisputably powerful in human affairs; often very harmfully so; sometimes devouring widows' houses, and consuming the strongest and fairest from among the young; freezing into merciless bigotry the policy of the old: also, on the other hand, animating national courage, and raising souls, otherwise sordid, into heroism: on the whole, always a real and great power; served with daily sacrifice of gold, time, and thought; putting forth its claims, if hypocritically, at least in bold hypocrisy, not waiving an atom of them in doubt or fear; and, assuredly, in large measure, sincere, believing in itself, and believed: a goodly system, moreover, in aspect; gorgeous, harmonious, mysterious; — a thing which had either to be obeyed or combated, but could not be scorned. A religion towering over all the city—many-buttressed—luminous in marble stateliness, as the dome of our Lady of Safety shines over the sea; many-voiced also, giving, over all the eastern seas, to the sentinel his watchword, to the soldier his war-cry; and, on the lips of all who died for Venice, shaping the whisper of death.

§ 13. I suppose the boy Turner to have regarded the religion of his city also from an external intellectual standing-point.

What did he see in Maiden Lane?

Let not the reader be offended with me; I am willing to let him describe, at his own pleasure, what Turner saw there; but to me, it seems to have been this. A religion maintained occasionally, even the whole length of the lane, at point of constable's staff; but, at other times, placed under the custody of the beadle, within certain black and unstately iron railings of St. Paul's, Covent Garden. Among the wheelbarrows and over the vegetables, no perceptible dominance of religion; in the narrow, disquieted streets, none; in the tongues, deeds, daily ways of Maiden Lane, little. Some honesty, indeed, and English industry, and kindness of heart, and general idea of justice; but faith, of any national kind, shut up from one Sunday to the next, not artistically beautiful even in those Sabbatical exhibitions; its paraphernalia being chiefly of high pews, heavy elocution, and cold grimness of behaviour.

What chiaroscuro belongs to it—(dependent mostly on

candlelight),—we will, however, draw, considerably; no goodliness of escutcheon, nor other respectability being omitted, and the best of their results confessed, a meek old woman and a child being let into a pew, for whom the reading by candlelight will be beneficial.¹

§ 14. For the rest, this religion seems to him discreditable—discredited—not believing in itself; putting forth its authority in a cowardly way, watching how far it might be tolerated, continually shrinking, disclaiming, fencing, finessing; divided against itself, not by stormy rents, but by thin fissures, and splittings of plaster from the walls. Not to be either obeyed, or combated, by an ignorant, yet clear-sighted youth; only to be scorned. And scorned not one whit the less, though also the dome dedicated to *it* looms high over distant winding of the Thames; as St. Mark's campanile rose, for goodly landmark, over mirage of lagoon. For St. Mark ruled over life; the Saint of London over death; St. Mark over St. Mark's Place, but St. Paul over St. Paul's Churchyard.

§ 15. Under these influences pass away the first reflective hours of life, with such conclusion as they can reach. In consequence of a fit of illness, he was taken—I cannot ascertain in what year—to live with an aunt, at Brentford; and here, I believe, received some schooling, which he seems to have snatched vigorously; getting knowledge, at least by translation, of the more picturesque classical authors, which he turned presently to use, as we shall see. Hence also, walks about Putney and Twickenham in the summer time acquainted him with the look of English meadow-ground in its restricted states of paddock and park; and with some round-headed appearances of trees, and stately entrances to houses of mark: the avenue at Bushy, and the iron gates and carved pillars of Hampton, impressing him apparently with great awe and admiration; so that in after life his little country house is,—of all places in the world,—at Twickenham! Of swans and reedy shores he now learns the soft motion and the green mystery, in a way not to be forgotten.

¹ Liber Studiorum. "Interior of a church." It is worthy of remark that Giorgione and Titian are always delighted to have an opportunity of drawing priests. The English Church may, perhaps, accept it as matter of congratulation that this is the only instance in which Turner drew a clergyman.

§ 16. And at last fortune wills that the lad's true life shall begin; and one summer's evening, after various wonderful stage-coach experiences on the north road, which gave him a love of stage-coaches ever after, he finds himself sitting alone among the Yorkshire hills.¹ For the first time, the silence of Nature round him, her freedom sealed to him, her glory opened to him. Peace at last; no roll of cart-wheel, nor mutter of sullen voices in the back shop; but curlew-cry in space of heaven, and welling of bell-toned streamlet by its shadowy rock. Freedom at last. Dead-wall, dark railing, fenced field, gated garden, all passed away like the dream of a prisoner; and behold, far as foot or eye can race or range, the moor, and cloud. Loveliness at last. It is here then, among these deserted vales! Not among men. Those pale, poverty-struck, or cruel faces;—that multitudinous, marred humanity—are not the only things that God has made. Here is something He has made which no one has marred. Pride of purple rocks, and river pools of blue, and tender wilderness of glittering trees, and misty light of evening on immeasurable hills.

§ 17. Beauty, and freedom, and peace; and yet another teacher, graver than these. Sound preaching at last here, in Kirkstall crypt, concerning fate and life. Here, where the dark pool reflects the chancel pillars, and the cattle lie in unhindered rest, the soft sunshine on their dappled bodies, instead of priests' vestments; their white furry hair ruffled a little, fitfully, by the evening wind, deep-scented from the meadow thyme.

§ 18. Consider deeply the import to him of this, his first sight of ruin, and compare it with the effect of the architecture that was around Giorgione. There were indeed aged buildings, at Venice, in his time, but none in decay. All ruin was removed, and its place filled as quickly as in our London; but filled always by architecture loftier and more wonderful than that whose place it took, the boy himself happy to work upon the walls of it; so that the idea of the passing away of the strength of men and beauty of their

¹ I do not mean that this is his first acquaintance with the country, but the first impressive and touching one, after his mind was formed. The earliest sketches I found in the National collection are at Clifton and Bristol; the next, at Oxford.

works never could occur to him sternly. Brighter and brighter the cities of Italy had been rising and broadening on hill and plain, for three hundred years. He saw only strength and immortality, could not but paint both; conceived the form of man as deathless, calm with power, and fiery with life.

§ 19. Turner saw the exact reverse of this. In the present work of men, meanness, aimlessness, unsightliness: thin-walled, lath-divided, narrow-garreted houses of clay; booths of a darksome Vanity Fair, busily base.

But on Whitby Hill, and by Bolton Brook, remained traces of other handiwork. Men who could build had been there; and who also had wrought, not merely for their own days. But to what purpose? Strong faith, and steady hands, and patient souls—can this, then, be all you have left! this the sum of your doing on the earth!—a nest whence the night-owl may whimper to the brook, and a ribbed skeleton of consumed arches, looming above the bleak banks of mist, from its cliff to the sea?

As the strength of men to Giorgione, to Turner their weakness and vileness, were alone visible. They themselves, unworthy or ephemeral; their work, despicable, or decayed. In the Venetian's eyes, all beauty depended on man's presence and pride; in Turner's, on the solitude he had left, and the humiliation he had suffered.

§ 20. And thus the fate and issue of all his work were determined at once. He must be a painter of the strength of nature, there was no beauty elsewhere than in that; he must paint also the labour and sorrow and passing away of men; this was the great human truth visible to him.

Their labour, their sorrow, and their death. Mark the three. Labour; by sea and land, in field and city, at forge and furnace, helm and plough. No pastoral indolence nor classic pride shall stand between him and the troubling of the world; still less between him and the toil of his country, —blind, tormented, unwearied, marvellous England.

§ 21. Also their Sorrow; Ruin of all their glorious work, passing away of their thoughts and their honour, mirage of pleasure, FALLACY OF HOPE; gathering of weed on temple step; gaining of wave on deserted strand; weeping of the mother for the children, desolate by her breathless first-born

in the streets of the city,¹ desolate by her last sons slain, among the beasts of the field.²

§ 22. And their Death. That old Greek question again—yet unanswered. The unconquerable spectre still flitting among the forest trees at twilight; rising ribbed out of the sea-sand;—white, a strange Aphrodite,—out of the sea-foam; stretching its grey, cloven wings among the clouds; turning the light of their sunsets into blood. This has to be looked upon, and in a more terrible shape than ever Salvator or Durer saw it. The wreck of one guilty country does not infer the ruin of all countries, and need not cause general terror respecting the laws of the universe. Neither did the orderly and narrow succession of domestic joy and sorrow in a small German community bring the question in its breadth, or in any unresolvable shape, before the mind of Durer. But the English death—the European death of the nineteenth century—was of another range of power; more terrible a thousand-fold in its merely physical grasp and grief; more terrible, incalculably, in its mystery and shame. What were the robber's casual pang, or the rage of the flying skirmish, compared to the work of the axe, and the sword, and the famine, which was done during this man's youth on all the hills and plains of the Christian earth, from Moscow to Gibraltar. He was eighteen years old when Napoleon came down on Arcola. Look on the map of Europe, and count the blood-stains on it, between Arcola and Waterloo.

§ 23. Not alone those blood-stains on the Alpine snow, and the blue of the Lombard plain. The English death was before his eyes also. No decent, calculable, consoled dying; no passing to rest like that of the aged burghers of Nuremberg town. No gentle processions to churchyards among the fields, the bronze crests bossed deep on the memorial tablets, and the skylark singing above them from among the corn. But the life trampled out in the slime of the street, crushed to dust amidst the roaring of the wheel, tossed countless away into howling winter wind along five hundred leagues of rock-fanged shore. Or, worst of all, rotted down to forgotten graves through years of ignorant patience, and vain

¹ "The Tenth Plague of Egypt."

² "Rizpah, the Daughter of Aiah."

seeking for help from man, for hope in God—infirm, imperfect yearning, as of motherless infants starving at the dawn; oppressed royalties of captive thought, vague ague-fits of bleak, amazed despair.

§ 24. A goodly landscape this, for the lad to paint, and under a goodly light. Wide enough the light was, and clear; no more Salvator's lurid chasm on jagged horizon, nor Durer's spotted rest of sunny gleam on hedgerow and field; but light over all the world. Full shone now its awful globe, one pallid charnel-house,—a ball strewn bright with human ashes, glaring in poised sway beneath the sun, all blinding-white with death from pole to pole,—death, not of myriads of poor bodies only, but of will, and mercy, and conscience; death, not once inflicted on the flesh, but daily fastening on the spirit; death, not silent or patient, waiting his appointed hour, but voiceful, venomous; death with the taunting word, and burning grasp, and infixed sting.

“Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.” The word is spoken in our ears continually to other reapers than the angels,—to the busy skeletons that never tire for stooping. When the measure of iniquity is full, and it seems that another day might bring repentance and redemption,—“Put ye in the sickle.” When the young life has been wasted all away, and the eyes are just opening upon the tracks of ruin, and faint resolution rising in the heart for nobler things, “Put ye in the sickle.” When the roughest blows of fortune have been borne long and bravely, and the hand is just stretched to grasp its goal,—“Put ye in the sickle.” And when there are but a few in the midst of a nation, to save it, or to teach, or to cherish; and all its life is bound up in those few golden ears,—“Put ye in the sickle, pale reapers, and pour hemlock for your feast of harvest home.”

This was the sight which opened on the young eyes, this the watchword sounding within the heart of Turner in his youth.

So taught, and prepared for his life's labour, sate the boy at last alone among his fair English hills; and began to paint, with cautious toil, the rocks, and fields, and trickling brooks and soft, white clouds of heaven.

TURNER'S SEA PAINTING

I

THERE is a might and wonder about it (his painting of water) which will not admit of our whys or hows. Take, for instance, the picture of the Sun of Venice going to Sea, of 1843, respecting which, however, there are one or two circumstances which may as well be noted besides its water-painting. The reader, if he has not been at Venice, ought to be made aware that the Venetian fishing-boats, almost without exception, carry canvas painted with bright colours, the favourite design for the centre being either a cross or a large sun with many rays, the favourite colours being red, orange, and black, blue occurring occasionally. The radiance of these sails and of the bright and grotesque vanes at the mast-heads under sunlight is beyond all painting, but it is strange that, of constant occurrence as these boats are on all the lagoons, Turner alone should have availed himself of them. Nothing could be more faithful than the boat which was the principal object in this picture, in the cut of the sail, the filling of it, the exact height of the boom above the deck, the quartering of it with colour, finally and especially, the hanging of the fish-baskets about the bows. All these, however, are comparatively minor merits (though not the blaze of colour which the artist elicited from the right use of these circumstances), but the peculiar power of the picture was the painting of the sea surface, where there were no reflections to assist it. A stream of splendid colour fell from the boat, but that occupied the centre only; in the distance the city and crowded boats threw down some playing lines, but these still left on each side of the boat a large space of water reflecting nothing but the morning sky. This was divided by an eddying swell, on whose continuous sides the local colour of the water was seen, pure aqua-marine (a beautiful occurrence of closely-observed truth), but still there remained a large blank space of pale water to be treated, the sky above had no distinct details, and was pure faint grey,

with broken white vestiges of cloud: it gave no help therefore. But there the water lay, no dead grey flat paint, but downright clear, playing, palpable surface, full of indefinite hue, and retiring as regularly and visibly back and far away, as if there had been objects all over it to tell the story by perspective. Now it is the doing of this which tries the painter, and it is his having done this which made me say above that "no man had ever painted the surface of calm water but Turner." The San Benedetto, looking towards Fusina, contained a similar passage, equally fine; in one of the Canale della Guidecca the specific green colour of the water is seen in front, with the shadows of the boats thrown on it in purple; all, as it retires, passing into the pure reflective blue.

But Turner is not satisfied with this. He is never altogether content unless he can, at the same time that he takes advantage of all the placidity of repose, tell us something either about the past commotion of the water, or of some present stirring of tide or current which its stillness does not show, or give us something or other to think about and reason upon, as well as to look at. Take a few instances. His Cowes, Isle of Wight, is a summer twilight about half an hour, or more, after sunset. Intensity of repose is the great aim throughout, and the unity of tone of the picture is one of the finest things that Turner has ever done. But there is not only quietness, there is the very deepest solemnity in the whole of the light, as well as in the stillness of the vessels; and Turner wishes to enhance this feeling by representing not only repose, but *power* in repose, the emblem in the sea, of the quiet ships of war. Accordingly, he takes the greatest possible pains to get his surface polished, calm, and smooth, but he indicates the reflection of a buoy floating a full quarter of a mile off by three black strokes with wide intervals between them, the last of which touches the water within twenty yards of the spectator. Now these three reflections can only indicate the farther sides of three rises of an enormous swell, and give by their intervals of separation, a space of from twelve to twenty yards for the breadth of each wave, including the sweep between them, and this swell is farther indicated by the reflection of the new moon falling in a wide zigzag line. The exceeding

majesty which this single circumstance gives to the whole picture, the sublime sensation of power and knowledge of former exertion which we instantly receive from it, if we have but acquaintance with nature enough to understand its language, render this work not only a piece of the most refined truth (as which I have at present named it), but to my mind, one of the highest pieces of intellectual art existing.

Again, in the scene on the Loire, with the square precipice and fiery sunset, in the Rivers of France, repose has been aimed at in the same way, and most thoroughly given; but the immense width of the river at this spot makes it look like a lake or sea, and it was therefore necessary that we should be made thoroughly to understand and feel that this is not the calm of still water, but the tranquillity of a majestic current. Accordingly, a boat swings at anchor on the right; and the stream, dividing at its bow, flows towards us in two long, dark waves, especial attention to which is enforced by the one on the left being brought across the reflected stream of sunshine, which it separates, and which is broken in the nearer water by the general undulation and agitation caused by the boat's wake; a wake caused by the water's passing it, not by *its* going through the water.

II

Few people, comparatively, have ever seen the effect on the sea of a powerful gale continued without intermission for three or four days and nights, and to those who have not, I believe it must be unimaginable, not from the mere force or size of surge, but from the complete annihilation of the limit between sea and air. The water from its prolonged agitation is beaten, not into mere creaming foam, but into masses of accumulated yeast, which hang in ropes and wreaths from wave to wave, and where one curls over to break, form a festoon like a drapery, from its edge; these are taken up by the wind, not in dissipating dust, but bodily, in writhing, hanging, coiling masses, which make the air white and thick as with snow, only the flakes are a foot or two long each; the surges themselves are full of foam in their very bodies, underneath, making them white all through, as the water is under a great cataract; and their masses,

being thus half water and half air, are torn to pieces by the wind whenever they rise, and carried away in roaring smoke, which chokes and strangles like actual water. Add to this, that when the air has been exhausted of its moisture by long rain, the spray of the sea is caught by it and covers its surface not merely with the smoke of finely divided water, but with boiling mist; imagine also the low rain-clouds brought down to the very level of the sea, as I have often seen them, whirling and flying in rags and fragments from wave to wave; and finally, conceive the surges themselves in their utmost pitch of power, velocity, vastness, and madness, lifting themselves in precipices and peaks, furrowed with their whirl of ascent, through all this chaos; and you will understand that there is indeed no distinction left between the sea and air; that no object, nor horizon, nor any landmark or natural evidence of position is left; that the heaven is all spray, and the ocean all cloud, and that you can see no farther in any direction than you could see through a cataract. Suppose the effect of the first sunbeam sent from above to show this annihilation to itself, and you have the sea picture of the Academy, 1842—the Snow-storm, one of the very grandest statements of sea-motion, mist, and light that has ever been put on canvas even by Turner. Of course it was not understood; his finest works never are; but there was some apology for the public's not comprehending this, for few people have had the opportunity of seeing the sea at such a time, and when they have, cannot face it. To hold by a mast or a rock, and watch it, is a prolonged endurance of drowning which few people have courage to go through. To those who have, it is one of the noblest lessons of nature.

But, I think, the noblest sea that Turner has ever painted, and, if so, the noblest certainly ever painted by man, is that of the *Slave Ship*, the chief Academy picture of the Exhibition of 1840. It is a sunset on the Atlantic, after prolonged storm; but the storm is partially lulled, and the torn and streaming rain-clouds are moving in scarlet lines to lose themselves in the hollow of the night. The whole surface of sea included in the picture is divided into two ridges of enormous swell, not high, nor local, but a low, broad heaving of the whole ocean, like the lifting of its bosom by deep

drawn breath after the torture of the storm. Between these two ridges the fire of the sunset falls along the trough of the sea, dyeing it with an awful but glorious light, the intense and lurid splendour which burns like gold, and bathes like blood. Along this fiery path and valley, the tossing waves by which the swell of the sea is restlessly divided, lift themselves in dark, indefinite, fantastic forms, each casting a faint and ghastly shadow behind it along the illumined foam. They do not rise everywhere, but three or four together in wild groups, fitfully and furiously, as the under strength of the swell compels or permits them; leaving between them treacherous spaces of level and whirling water, now lighted with green and lamp-like fire, now flashing back the gold of the declining sun, now fearfully dyed from above with the indistinguishable images of the burning clouds, which fall upon them in flakes of crimson and scarlet, and give to the reckless waves the added motion of their own fiery flying. Purple and blue, the lurid shadows of the hollow breakers are cast upon the mist of the night, which gathers cold and low, advancing like the shadow of death upon the guilty¹ ship as it labours amidst the lightning of the sea, its thin masts written upon the sky in lines of blood, girded with condemnation in that fearful hue which signs the sky with horror, and mixes its flaming flood with the sunlight,—and cast far along the desolate heave of the sepulchral waves, incarnadines the multitudinous sea.

I believe, if I were reduced to rest Turner's immortality upon any single work, I should choose this. Its daring conception—ideal in the highest sense of the word—is based on the purest truth, and wrought out with the concentrated knowledge of a life; its colour is absolutely perfect, not one false or morbid hue in any part or line, and so modulated that every square inch of canvas is a perfect composition; its drawing as accurate as fearless; the ship buoyant, bending, and full of motion; its tones as true as they are wonderful; and the whole picture dedicated to the most sublime of subjects and impressions—(completing thus the perfect system of all truth, which we have shown to be formed by Turner's works)—the power, majesty, and deathfulness of the open, deep, illimitable sea.

¹ She is a slaver, throwing her slaves overboard. The near sea is encumbered with corpses.

TURNER'S SALISBURY PLAIN

To him (Turner), as to the Greek, the storm-clouds seemed messengers of fate. He feared them, while he revered; nor does he ever introduce them without some hidden purpose, bearing upon the expression of the scene he is painting.

On that plain of Salisbury, he had been struck first by its widely-spacious pastoral life; and secondly, by its monuments of the two great religions of England—Druidical and Christian. He was not a man to miss the possible connection of these impressions. He treats the shepherd life as a type of the ecclesiastical; and composes his two drawings so as to illustrate both.

In the drawing of Salisbury, the plain is swept by rapid but not distressful rain. The cathedral occupies the centre of the picture, towering high over the city, of which the houses (made on purpose smaller than they really are) are scattered about it like a flock of sheep. The cathedral is surrounded by a great light. The storm gives way at first in a subdued gleam over a distant parish church, then bursts down again, breaks away into full light about the cathedral, and passes over the city, in various sun and shade. In the foreground stands a shepherd leaning on his staff, watching his flock—bareheaded: he has given his cloak to a group of children, who have covered themselves up with it, and are shrinking from the rain; his dog crouches under a bank; his sheep, for the most part, are resting quietly, some coming up the slope of the bank towards him.

The rain-clouds in this picture are wrought with a care which I have never seen equalled in any other sky of the same kind. It is the rain of blessing—abundant, but full of brightness; golden gleams are flying across the wet grass, and fall softly on the lines of willows in the valley—willows by the watercourses; the little brooks flash out here and there between them and the fields. Turn now to the Stonehenge. That, also, stands in great light; but it is the

Gorgon light—the sword of Chrysaor is bared against it. The cloud of judgment hangs above. The rock pillars seem to reel before its slope, pale beneath the lightning. And nearer, in the darkness, the shepherd lies dead, his flock scattered.

THE RAIN CLOUD

THE moss-lands have one great advantage over the forest-lands, namely, sight of the sky. And not only sight of it, but continual and beneficent help from it. What they have to separate them from barren rock, namely, their moss and streams, being dependent on its direct help, not on great rivers coming from distant mountain chains, nor on vast tracts of ocean-mist coming up at evening, but on the continual play and change of sun and cloud.

Note this word "change." The moss-lands have an infinite advantage, not only in sight, but in liberty; they are the freest ground in all the world. You can only traverse the great woods by crawling like a lizard, or climbing like a monkey—the great sands with slow steps and veiled head. But bare-headed, and open-eyed, and free-limbed, commanding all the horizon's space of changeful light, and all the horizon's compass of tossing ground, you traverse the moss-land. In discipline it is severe as the desert, but it is a discipline compelling to action; and the moss-lands seem, therefore, the rough schools of the world, in which its strongest human frames are knit and tried, and so sent down, like the northern winds, to brace and brighten the languor into which the repose of more favoured districts may degenerate.

It would be strange, indeed, if there were no beauty in the phenomena by which this great renovating and purifying work is done. And it is done almost entirely by the great Angel of the Sea—rain; the Angel observe, the messenger sent to a special place on a special errand. Not the diffused perpetual presence of the burden of mist, but the going and returning of intermittent cloud. All turns upon that intermittence. Soft moss on stone and rock;—cave-fern of

tangled glen;—wayside well—perennial, patient, silent, clear; stealing through its square font of rough-hewn stone; ever thus deep—no more—which the winter wreck sullies not, the summer thirst wastes not, incapable of stain as of decline—where the fallen leaf floats undecayed, and the insect darts undefiling. Cressed brook and ever-eddying river, lifted even in flood scarcely over its stepping-stones,—but through all sweet summer keeping tremulous music with harp-strings of dark water among the silver fingering of the pebbles. Far away in the south the strong river Gods have all hasted, and gone down to the sea. Wasted and burning, white furnaces of blasting sand, their broad beds lie ghastly and bare; but here the soft wings of the Sea Angel droop still with dew, and the shadows of their plumes falter on the hills; strange laughings and glitterings of silver streamlets, born suddenly, and twined about the mossy heights in trickling tinsel, answering to them as they wave.¹

Nor are those wings colourless. We habitually think of the rain-cloud only as dark and grey; not knowing that we owe to it perhaps the fairest, though not the most dazzling of the hues of heaven. Often in our English mornings, the rain-clouds in the dawn form soft level fields, which melt imperceptibly into the blue; or when of less extent, gather into apparent bars, crossing the sheets of broader cloud above; and all these bathed throughout in an unspeakable light of pure rose-colour, and purple, and amber, and blue; not shining, but misty-soft; the barred masses, when seen nearer, composed of clusters or tresses of cloud, like floss silk; looking as if each knot were a little swathe or sheaf of lighted rain. No clouds form such skies, none are so tender, various, inimitable. Turner himself never caught them. Correggio, putting out his whole strength, could have painted them, no other man.²

¹ Compare the beautiful stanza beginning the epilogue of the "Golden Legend."

² I do not mean that Correggio is greater than Turner, but that only *his* way of work, the touch which he has used for the golden hair of Antiope, for instance, could have painted these clouds. In open lowland country I have never been able to come to any satisfactory conclusion about their height, so strangely do they blend with each other. Here, for instance, is the arrangement of an actual group of them. The space at A was deep, purest ultramarine blue, traversed by streaks of absolutely pure and perfect rose-colour. The blue passed downwards imperceptibly into grey at C, and then into amber, and at the

For these are the robes of love of the Angel of the Sea. To these that name is chiefly given, the "spreadings of the clouds," from their extent, their gentleness, their fulness of rain. Note how they are spoken of in Job xxxvi. v. 29-31. "By them judgeth he the people; he giveth meat in abundance. With clouds he covereth the light.¹ He hath hidden the light in his hands, and commanded it that it should return. He speaks of it to his friend; that it is his possession, and that he may ascend thereto."

That, then, is the Sea Angel's message to God's friends; *that*, the meaning of those strange golden lights and purple flushes before the morning rain. The rain is sent to judge, and feed us; but the light is the possession of the friends of

white edge below into gold. On this amber ground the streaks *P* were dark purple, and, finally, the spaces at *B B*, again, clearest and most precious blue, paler than that at *A*. The *two* levels of these clouds are always very notable. After a continuance of fine weather among the



Alps, the determined approach of rain is usually announced by a soft, unbroken film of level cloud, white and thin at the approaching edge, grey at the horizon, covering the whole sky from side to side, and advancing steadily from the south-west. Under its grey veil, as it approaches, are formed detached bars, darker or lighter than the field above, according to the position of the sun. These bars are usually of a very sharply elongated oval shape, something like fish. I habitually call them "fish clouds," and look upon them with much discomfort, if any excursions of interest have been planned within the next three days. Their oval shape is a perspective deception dependent on their flatness; they are probably thin, extended fields, irregularly circular.

¹ I do not copy the interpolated words which follow, "and commandeth it *not to shine*." The closing verse of the chapter, as we have it, is unintelligible; not so in the Vulgate, the reading of which I give.

God, and they may ascend thereto,—where the tabernacle veil will cross and part its rays no more.

But the Angel of the Sea has also another message,—in the “great rain of his strength,” rain of trial, sweeping away ill-set foundations. Then his robe is not spread softly over the whole heaven, as a veil, but sweeps back from his shoulders, ponderous, oblique, terrible—leaving his sword-arm free.

The approach of trial-storm, hurricane-storm, is indeed in its vastness as the clouds of the softer rain. But it is not slow nor horizontal, but swift and steep: swift with passion of ravenous winds; steep as slope of some dark, hollowed hill. The fronting clouds come leaning forward, one thrusting the other aside, or on; impatient, ponderous, impendent, like globes of rock tossed of Titans—Ossa on Olympus—but hurled forward all, in one wave of cloud-lava—cloud whose throat is as a sepulchre. Fierce behind them rages the oblique wrath of the rain, white as ashes, dense as showers of driven steel; the pillars of it full of ghastly life; Rain-Furies, shrieking as they fly;—scourging, as with whips of scorpions;—the earth ringing and trembling under them, heaven wailing wildly, the trees stooped blindly down, covering their faces, quivering in every leaf with horror, ruin of their branches flying by them like black stubble.

I wrote Furies. I ought to have written Gorgons. Perhaps the reader does not know that the Gorgons are not dead, are ever undying. We shall have to take our chance of being turned into stones by looking them in the face, presently. Meantime, I gather what part of the great Greek story of the Sea Angels has meaning for us here.

Nereus, the God of the Sea, who dwells in it always (Neptune being the God who rules it from Olympus), has children by the Earth; namely, Thaumas, the father of Iris; that is, the “wonderful” or miracle-working angel of the sea; Phorcys, the malignant angel of it (you will find him degraded through many forms, at last, in the story of Sinbad, into the old man of the sea); Ceto, the deep places of the sea, meaning its bays among rocks, therefore called by Hesiod “Fair-cheeked” Ceto; and Eurybia, the tidal force or sway of the sea, of whom more hereafter.

Phorcys and Ceto, the malignant angel of the sea, and the

spirit of its deep rocky places, have children, namely, first Graiæ, the soft rain-clouds. The Greeks had a greater dislike of storm than we have, and therefore whatever violence is in the action of rain, they represented by harsher types than we should—types given in one group by Aristophanes (speaking in mockery of the poets): "This was the reason, then, that they made so much talk about the fierce rushing of the moist clouds, coiled in glittering; and the locks of the hundred-headed Typhon; and the blowing storms; and the bent-clawed birds drifted on the breeze, fresh, and ærial." Note the expression "bent-clawed birds." It illustrates two characters of these clouds; partly their coiling form; but more directly the way they tear down the earth from the hill-sides; especially those twisted storm-clouds which in violent action become the water-spout. These always strike at a narrow point, often opening the earth on a hill-side into a trench as a great pickaxe would (whence the Graiæ are said to have only one beak between them). Nevertheless, the rain-cloud was, on the whole, looked upon by the Greeks as beneficent, so that it is boasted of in the *Œdipus Coloneus* for its perpetual feeding of the springs of Cephissus, and elsewhere often; and the opening song of the rain-clouds in Aristophanes is entirely beautiful:—

"O eternal Clouds! let us raise into open sight our dewy existence, from the deep-sounding Sea, our Father, up to the crests of the wooded hills, whence we look down over the sacred land, nourishing its fruits, and over the rippling of the divine rivers, and over the low murmuring bays of the deep." I cannot satisfy myself about the meaning of the names of the Graiæ—Pephredo and Enuo—but the epithets which Hesiod gives them are interesting: "Pephredo, the well-robed; Enuo, the crocus-robed;" probably, it seems to me, from their beautiful colours in morning.

Next to the Graiæ, Phorcys and Ceto begat the Gorgons, which are the true storm-clouds. The Graiæ have only one beak or tooth, but all the Gorgons have tusks like boars; brazen hands (brass being the word used for the metal of which the Greeks made their spears), and golden wings.

Their names are "Steino" (straitened), of storms compressed into narrow compass; "Euryale" (having wide

threshing-floor), of storms spread over great space; "Medusa" (the dominant), the most terrible. She is essentially the highest storm-cloud; therefore the hail-cloud or cloud of cold, her countenance turning all who behold it to stone. ("He casteth forth his ice like morsels. Who can stand before his cold?") The serpents about her head are the fringes of the hail, the idea of coldness being connected by the Greeks with the bite of the serpent, as with the hemlock.

On Minerva's shield, her head signifies, I believe, the cloudy coldness of knowledge, and its venomous character ("Knowledge puffeth up." Compare Bacon in *Advancement of Learning*). But the idea of serpents rose essentially from the change of form in the cloud as it broke; the cumulus cloud not breaking into full storm till it is cloven by the cirrus; which is twice hinted at in the story of Perseus; only we must go back a little to gather it together.

Perseus was the son of Jupiter by Danaë, who being shut in a brazen tower, Jupiter came to her in a shower of gold: the brazen tower being, I think, only another expression for the cumulus of Medusa cloud; and the golden rain for the rays of the sun striking it; but we have not only this rain of Danaë's to remember in connection with the Gorgon, but that also of the sieves of the Danaïdes, said to represent the provision of Argos with water by their father Danaüs, who dug wells about the Acropolis; nor only wells, but opened, I doubt not, channels of irrigation for the fields, because the Danaïdes are said to have brought the mysteries of Ceres from Egypt. And though I cannot trace the root of the names Danaüs and Danaë, there is assuredly some farther link of connection in the deaths of the lovers of the Danaïdes, whom they slew, as Perseus Medusa. And again note, that when the father of Danaë, Acrisius, is detained in Seriphos by storms, a disk thrown by Perseus is carried *by the wind against his head*, and kills him; and lastly, when Perseus cuts off the head of Medusa, from her blood springs Chrysaor, "wielder of the golden sword," the Angel of the Lightning, and Pegasus, the Angel of the "Wild Fountains," that is to say, the fastest flying or lower rain-cloud; winged, but racing as upon the earth.

I say, "wild" fountains; because the kind of fountain from which Pegasus is named is especially the "fountain

of the great deep " of Genesis; sudden and furious (cataracts of heaven, not windows, in the Septuagint);—the mountain torrent caused by thunderous storms, or as our " fountain "—a Geyser-like leaping forth of water. Therefore, it is the deep and full source of streams, and so used typically of the source of evils, or of passions; whereas the word " spring " with the Greeks is like our " well-head "—a gentle issuing forth of water continually. But, because both the lightning-fire and the gushing forth, as of a fountain, are the signs of the poet's true power, together with perpetuity, it is Pegasus who strikes the earth with his foot, on Helicon,¹ and causes Hippocrene to spring forth—" the horse's well-head." It is perpetual; but has, nevertheless, the Pegasean storm-power.

Wherein we may find, I think, sufficient cause for putting honour upon the rain-cloud. Few of us, perhaps, have thought, in watching its career across our own mossy hills, or listening to the murmur of the springs amidst the mountain quietness, that the chief masters of the human imagination owed, and confessed that they owed, the force of their noblest thoughts, not to the flowers of the valley, nor the majesty of the hill, but to the flying cloud.

Yet they never saw it fly, as we may in our own England. So far, at least, as I know the clouds of the south, they are often more terrible than ours, but the English Pegasus is swifter. On the Yorkshire and Derbyshire hills, when the rain-cloud is low and much broken, and the steady west-wind fills all space with its strength,² the sun-gleams fly like golden vultures: they are flashes rather than shinings; the

¹ I believe, however, that when Pegasus strikes forth this fountain, he is to be regarded, not as springing from Medusa's blood, but as born of Medusa by Neptune; the true horse was given by Neptune striking the earth with his trident; the divine horse is born to Neptune and the storm-cloud.

² I have been often at great heights on the Alps in rough weather, and have seen strong gusts of storm in the plains of the south. But, to get full expression of the very heart and meaning of wind, there is no place like a Yorkshire moor. I think Scottish breezes are thinner, very bleak and piercing, but not substantial. If you lean on them they will let you fall, but one may rest against a Yorkshire breeze as one would on a quickset hedge. I shall not soon forget,—having had the good fortune to meet a vigorous one on an April morning, between Hawes and Settle, just on the flat under Wharfedale,—the vague sense of wonder with which I watched Ingleborough stand without rocking.

dark spaces and the dazzling race and skim along the acclivities, and dart and dip from crag to dell, swallow-like;—no Graiæ these,—grey and withered: Grey Hounds rather, following the Cerinthian stag with the golden antlers.

THE DARK CLOUD

A NARROW cloud of outline quaint,
Much like a human hand;
And after it, with following faint
Came up a dull, grey, lengthening band
Of small cloud-billows, like sea-sand,
And then, out of the gaps of blue,
Left moveless in the sky, there grew
Long snaky knots of sable mist,
Which counter-winds did vex and twist,
Knitted and loosed, and tossed and tore,
Like passive weeds on that sandy shore;
And these seemed with their touch to infect
The sweet, white upper clouds, and checked
Their pacing on the heavenly floor,
And quenched the light which was to them
As blood and life, singing the while
A fitful requiem;
Until the hues of each cloud-isle
Sank into one vast veil of dread,
Coping the heaven as if with lead,
With dragged, pale edges here and there,
Through which the moon's transparent glare
Fell with a dusky red.
And all the summer voices sank
To let that darkness pass;
The weeds were quiet on the bank,
The cricket in the grass;
The merry birds, the buzzing flies,
The leaves of many lips,
Did make their songs a sacrifice
Unto the noon-eclipse.

MOUNTAINS

I

EVEN among our own hills of Scotland and Cumberland, though often too barren to be perfectly beautiful, and always too low to be perfectly sublime, it is strange how many deep sources of delight are gathered into the compass of their glens and vales; and how, down to the most secret cluster of their far-away flowers, and the idlest leap of their straying streamlets, the whole heart of Nature seems thirsting to give, and still to give, shedding forth her everlasting beneficence with a profusion so patient, so passionate, that our utmost observance and thankfulness are but, at last, neglect of her nobleness, and apathy to her love. But among the true mountains of the greater orders the Divine purpose of appeal at once to all the faculties of the human spirit becomes still more manifest.

Inferior hills ordinarily interrupt, in some degree, the richness of the valleys at their feet; the grey downs of southern England, and treeless coteaux of central France, and grey swells of Scottish moor, whatever peculiar charm they may possess in themselves, are at least destitute of those which belong to the woods and fields of the lowlands. But the great mountains *lift* the lowlands *on their sides*. Let the reader imagine, first, the appearance of the most varied plain of some richly cultivated country; let him imagine it dark with graceful woods, and soft with deepest pastures; let him fill the space of it, to the utmost horizon, with innumerable and changeful incidents of scenery and life; leading pleasant streamlets through its meadows, strewing clusters of cottages beside their banks, tracing sweet footpaths through its avenues, and animating its fields with happy flocks, and slow wandering spots of cattle; and when he has wearied himself with endless imagining, and left no space without some loveliness of its own, let him conceive all this great plain, with its infinite treasures of natural beauty and happy human life, gathered up in God's

hands from one edge of the horizon to the other, like a woven garment; and shaken into deep falling folds, as the robes droop from a king's shoulders; all its bright rivers leaping into cataracts along the hollows of its fall, and all its forests rearing themselves aslant against its slopes, as a rider rears himself back when his horse plunges; and all its villages nestling themselves into the new windings of its glens; and all its pastures thrown into steep waves of greensward, dashed with dew along the edges of their folds, and sweeping down into endless slopes, with a cloud here and there lying quietly, half on the grass, half in the air; and he will have as yet, in all this lifted world, only the foundation of one of the great Alps. And whatever is lovely in the lowland scenery becomes lovelier in this change: the trees which grew heavily and stiffly from the level line of plain assume strange curves of strength and grace as they bend themselves against the mountain side; they breathe more freely, and toss their branches more carelessly as each climbs higher looking to the clear light above the topmost leaves of its brother tree: the flowers which on the arable plain fell before the plough, now find out for themselves unapproachable places, where year by year they gather into happier fellowship, and fear no evil; and the streams which in the level land crept in dark eddies by unwholesome banks, now move in showers of silver, and are clothed with rainbows, and bring health and life wherever the glance of their waves can reach.

And although this beauty seems at first, in its wildness, inconsistent with the service of man, it is, in fact, more necessary to his happy existence than all the level and easily subdued land which he rejoices to possess. It seems almost an insult to the reader's intelligence to ask him to dwell (as if they could be doubted) on the *uses* of the hills; and yet so little, until lately, have those uses been understood, that, in the seventeenth century, one of the most enlightened of the religious men of his day (Fleming), himself a native of a mountain country, casting about for some reason to explain to himself the existence of mountains, and prove their harmony with the general perfectness of the providential government of creation, can light upon this reason only, "They are inhabited by the beasts."

II

Every fountain and river, from the inch-deep streamlet that crosses the village lane in trembling clearness, to the massy and silent march of the everlasting multitude of waters in Amazon or Ganges, owe their play, and purity, and power, to the ordained elevations of the earth. Gentle or steep, extended or abrupt, some determined slope of the earth's surface is of course necessary, before any wave can so much as overtake one sedge in its pilgrimage; and how seldom do we enough consider, as we walk beside the margins of our pleasant brooks, how beautiful and wonderful is that ordinance, of which every blade of grass that waves in their clear water is a perpetual sign; that the dew and rain fallen on the face of the earth shall find no resting-place; shall find, on the contrary, fixed channels traced for them, from the ravines of the central crests down which they roar in sudden ranks of foam, to the dark hollows beneath the banks of lowland pasture, round which they must circle slowly among the stems and beneath the leaves of the lilies; paths prepared for them, by which, at some appointed rate of journey, they must evermore descend, sometimes slow and sometimes swift, but never pausing; the daily portion of the earth they have to glide over marked for them at each successive sunrise, the place which has known them knowing them no more, and the gateways of guarding mountains opened for them in cleft and chasm, none letting them in their pilgrimage; and, from far off, the great heart of the sea calling them to itself! Deep calleth unto deep. I know not which of the two is the more wonderful,—that calm, gradated, invisible slope of champaign land, which gives motion to the stream; or that passage cloven for it through the ranks of hill, which, necessary for the health of the land immediately around them, would yet, unless so supernaturally divided, have fatally intercepted the flow of the waters from far-off countries.

When did the great spirit of the river first knock at those adamantine gates? When did the porter open to it, and cast his keys away for ever, lapped in whirling sand? I am not satisfied—no one should be satisfied—with that vague

answer,—the river cut its way. Not so. The river *found* its way. I do not see that rivers, in their own strength, can do much in cutting their way; they are nearly as apt to choke their channels up, as to carve them out. Only give a river some little sudden power in a valley, and see how it will use it. Cut itself a bed? Not so, by any means, but fill up its bed, and look for another, in a wild, dissatisfied, inconsistent manner. Any way, rather than the old one, will better please it; and even if it is banked up and forced to keep to the old one, it will not deepen, but do all it can to raise it, and leap out of it. And although, wherever water has a steep fall, it will swiftly cut itself a bed deep into the rock or ground, it will not, when the rock is hard, cut a wider channel than it actually needs; so that if the existing river beds, through ranges of mountain, had in reality been cut by the streams, they would be found, wherever the rocks are hard, only in the form of narrow and profound ravines,—like the well-known channel of the Niagara, below the fall; not in that of extended valleys. And the actual work of true mountain rivers, though often much greater in proportion to their body of water than that of the Niagara, is quite insignificant when compared with the area and depth of the valleys through which they flow; so that, although in many cases it appears that those larger valleys have been excavated at earlier periods by more powerful streams, or by the existing stream in a more powerful condition, still the great fact remains always equally plain, and equally admirable, that, whatever the nature and duration of the agencies employed, the earth was so shaped at first as to direct the currents of its rivers in the manner most healthy and convenient for man.

The valley of the Rhone may, though it is not likely, have been in great part excavated in early time by torrents a thousand times larger than the Rhone; but it could not have been excavated at all, unless the mountains had been thrown at first into two chains, between which the torrents were set to work in a given direction. And it is easy to conceive how, under any less beneficent dispositions of their masses of hill, the continents of the earth might either have been covered with enormous lakes, as parts of North America actually are covered; or have become wildernesses of pes-

tiferous marsh; or lifeless plains, upon which the water would have dried as it fell, leaving them for great part of the year desert. Such districts do exist, and exist in vastness: the *whole* earth is not prepared for the habitation of man; only certain small portions are prepared for him,—the houses, as it were, of the human race, from which they are to look abroad upon the rest of the world, not to wonder or complain that it is not all house, but to be grateful for the kindness of the admirable building, in the house itself, as compared with the rest. It would be as absurd to think it an evil that all the world is not fit for us to inhabit, as to think it an evil that the globe is no larger than it is. As much as we shall ever need is evidently assigned to us for our dwelling-place; the rest, covered with rolling waves or drifting sands, fretted with ice or crested with fire, is set before us for contemplation in an uninhabitable magnificence; and that part which we are enabled to inhabit owes its fitness for human life chiefly to its mountain ranges, which, throwing the superfluous rain off as it falls, collect it in streams or lakes, and guide it into given places, and in given directions; so that men can build their cities in the midst of fields which they know will be always fertile, and establish the lines of their commerce upon streams which will not fail.

Nor is this giving of motion to water to be considered as confined only to the surface of the earth. A no less important function of the hills is in directing the flow of the fountains and springs, from subterranean reservoirs. There is no miraculous springing up of water out of the ground at our feet; but every fountain and well is supplied from a reservoir among the hills, so placed as to involve some slight fall or pressure, enough to secure the constant flowing of the stream. And the incalculable blessing of the power given to us in most valleys, of reaching by excavation some point whence the water will rise to the surface of the ground in perennial flow, is entirely owing to the concave disposition of the beds of clay or rock raised from beneath the bosom of the valley into ranks of enclosing hills.

III

Close beside the path by which travellers ascend the Montanvert from the valley of Chamouni, on the right hand, where it first begins to rise among the pines, there descends a small stream from the foot of the granite peak known to the guides as the Aiguille Charmoz. It is concealed from the traveller by a thicket of alder, and its murmur is hardly heard, for it is one of the weakest streams of the valley. But it is a constant stream; fed by a permanent though small glacier, and continuing to flow even to the close of the summer, when more copious torrents, depending only on the melting of the lower snows, have left their beds "stony channels in the sun."

I suppose that my readers must be generally aware that glaciers are masses of ice in slow motion, at the rate of from ten to twenty inches a day, and that the stones which are caught between them and the rocks over which they pass or which are embedded in the ice and dragged along by it over those rocks, are of course subjected to a crushing and grinding power altogether unparalleled by any other force in constant action. The dust to which these stones are reduced by the friction is carried down by the streams which flow from the melting glacier, so that the water which in the morning may be pure, owing what little strength it has chiefly to the rock springs, is in the afternoon not only increased in volume, but whitened with dissolved dust of granite, in proportion to the heat of the preceding hours of the day, and to the power and size of the glacier which feeds it.

The long drought which took place in the autumn of the year 1854, sealing every source of waters except these perpetual ones, left the torrent of which I am speaking, and such others, in a state peculiarly favourable to observance of their *least* action on the mountains from which they descend. They were entirely limited to their own ice fountains, and the quantity of powdered rock which they brought down was, of course, at its minimum, being nearly unmingled with any earth derived from the dissolution of softer soil, or vegetable mould, by rains.

At three in the afternoon, on a warm day in September,

when the torrent had reached its average maximum strength for the day, I filled an ordinary Bordeaux wine-flask with the water where it was least turbid. From this quart of water I obtained twenty-four grains of sand and sediment, more or less fine. I cannot estimate the quantity of water in the stream; but the runlet of it at which I filled the flask was giving about two hundred bottles a minute, or rather more, carrying down therefore about three quarters of a pound of powdered granite every minute. This would be forty-five pounds an hour; but allowing for the inferior power of the stream in the cooler periods of the day, and taking into consideration, on the other side, its increased power in rain, we may, I think, estimate its average hour's work at twenty-eight or thirty pounds, or a hundredweight every four hours. By this insignificant runlet, therefore, some four inches wide and four inches deep, rather more than two tons of the substance of the Mont Blanc are displaced, and carried down a certain distance every week; and as it is only for three or four months that the flow of the stream is checked by frost, we may certainly allow eighty tons for the mass which it annually moves.

It is not worth while to enter into any calculation of the relation borne by this runlet to the great torrents which descend from the chain of Mont Blanc into the valley of Chamouni. To call it the thousandth part of the glacier waters, would give a ludicrous under-estimate of their total power; but even so calling it, we should find for result that eighty thousand tons of mountain must be yearly transformed into drifted sand, and carried down a certain distance.¹ How much greater than this is the actual quantity so transformed I cannot tell; but take this quantity as certain, and consider that this represents merely the results of the labour of the constant summer streams, utterly irrespective of all sudden falls of stones and of masses of mountain (a single thunderbolt will sometimes leave a scar on the flank of a soft rock, looking like a trench for a railroad); and we shall then begin to apprehend something of the operation of the

¹ How far, is another question. The sand which the stream brings from the bottom of one eddy in its course, it throws down in the next; all that is *proved* by the above trial is, that so many tons of material are annually carried down by it a certain number of feet.

great laws of change, which are the conditions of all material existence, however apparently enduring. The hills, which, as compared with living beings, seem "everlasting," are, in truth, as perishing as they: its veins of flowing fountain weary the mountain heart, as the crimson pulse does ours; the natural force of the iron crag is abated in its appointed time, like the strength of the sinews in a human old age; and it is but the lapse of the longer years of decay which, in the sight of its Creator, distinguishes the mountain range from the moth and the worm.

IV

Not long ago, as I was leaving one of the towns of Switzerland, early in the morning, I saw in the clouds behind the houses an Alp which I did not know, a grander Alp than any I knew, nobler than the Schreckhorn or the Mönch; terminated, as it seemed, on one side by a precipice of almost unimaginable height; on the other, sloping away for leagues in one field of lustrous ice, clear and fair and blue, flashing here and there into silver under the morning sun. For a moment I received a sensation of as much sublimity as any natural object could possibly excite; the next moment, I saw that my unknown Alp was the glass roof of one of the workshops of the town, rising above its nearer houses, and rendered ærial and indistinct by some pure blue wood smoke which rose from intervening chimneys.

It is evident, that so far as the mere delight of the eye was concerned, the glass roof was here equal, or at least equal for a moment, to the Alp. Whether the power of the object over the heart was to be small or great, depended altogether upon what it was understood for, upon its being taken possession of and apprehended in its full nature, either as a granite mountain or a group of panes of glass; and thus, always, the real majesty of the appearance of the thing to us, depends upon the degree in which we ourselves possess the power of understanding it,—that penetrating, possession-taking power of the imagination, which has been long ago defined as the very life of the man, considered as a *seeing* creature. For though the casement had indeed been an Alp, there are many persons on whose minds it would have produced no

more effect than the glass roof. It would have been to them a glittering object of a certain apparent length and breadth, and whether of glass or ice, whether twenty feet in length, or twenty leagues, would have made no difference to them; or, rather, would not have been in anywise conceived or considered by them. Examine the nature of your own emotion (if you feel it) at the sight of the Alp, and you find all the brightness of that emotion hanging, like dew on gossamer, on a curious web of subtle fancy and imperfect knowledge. First, you have a vague idea of its size, coupled with wonder at the work of the great Builder of its walls and foundations, then an apprehension of its eternity, a pathetic sense of its perpetualness, and your own transientness, as of the grass upon its sides; then, and in this very sadness, a sense of strange companionship with past generations in seeing what they saw. They did not see the clouds that are floating over your head; nor the cottage wall on the other side of the field; nor the road by which you are travelling. But they saw *that*. The wall of granite in the heavens was the same to them as to you. They have ceased to look upon it; you will soon cease to look also, and the granite wall will be for others. Then, mingled with these more solemn imaginations, come the understandings of the gifts and glories of the Alp, the fancying forth of all the fountains that well from its rocky walls, and strong rivers that are born out of its ice, and of all the pleasant valleys that wind between its cliffs, and all the chalets that gleam among its clouds and happy farmsteads couched upon its pastures; while together with the thoughts of these, rise strange sympathies with all the unknown of human life, and happiness, and death, signified by that narrow white flame of the everlasting snow, seen so far in the morning sky.

These images, and far more than these, lie at the root of the emotion which you feel at the sight of the Alp. You may not trace them in your heart, for there is a great deal more in your heart, of evil and good, than you ever can trace; but they stir you and quicken you for all that.

V

In the range of inorganic nature, I doubt if any object can be found more perfectly beautiful than a fresh, deep snow-drift, seen under warm light. Its curves are of inconceivable perfection and changefulness, its surface and transparency alike exquisite, its light and shade of inexhaustible variety and inimitable finish, the shadows sharp, pale, and of heavenly colour, the reflected lights intense and multitudinous, and mingled with the sweet occurrences of transmitted light. No mortal hand can approach the majesty or loveliness of it, yet it is possible by care and skill at least to suggest the preciousness of its forms and intimate the nature of its light and shade; but this has never been attempted; it could not be done except by artists of a rank exceedingly high, and there is something about the feeling of snow in ordinary scenery which such men do not like.

But when the same qualities are exhibited on a magnificent Alpine scale and in a position where they interfere with no feeling of life, I see not why they should be neglected as they have hitherto been, unless that the difficulty of reconciling the brilliancy of snow with a picturesque light and shade, is so great that most good artists disguise or avoid the greater part of upper Alpine scenery, and hint at the glacier so slightly, that they do not feel the necessity of careful study of its forms. Habits of exaggeration increase the evil: I have seen a sketch from nature, by one of the most able of our landscape painters, in which a cloud had been mistaken for a snowy summit, and the hint thus taken exaggerated, as was likely, into an enormous mass of impossible height and unintelligent form, when the mountain itself, for which the cloud had been mistaken, though subtending an angle of about eighteen or twenty degrees, instead of the fifty attributed to it, was of a form so exquisite that it might have been a profitable lesson truly studied to Phidias. Nothing but failure can result from such methods of sketching, nor have I ever seen a single instance of an earnest study of snowy mountains by any one. Hence, wherever they are introduced, their drawing is utterly unintelligent, the forms being those of white rocks, or of rocks lightly powdered with snow, showing sufficiently that not only the

painters have never studied the mountain carefully from below, but that they have never climbed into the snowy region. Harding's rendering of the high Alps (*vide* the engraving of Chamonix, and of the Wengern Alp, in the illustrations to Byron) is best; but even he shows no perception of the real anatomy. Stanfield paints only white rocks instead of snow. Turner invariably avoids the difficulty, though he has shown himself capable of grappling with it in the ice of the Liber Studiorum (Mer de Glace), which is very cold and slippery and very like ice; but of the crusts and wreaths of the higher snow he has taken no cognizance. Even the vignettes to Rogers's Poems fail in this respect. It would be vain to attempt in this place to give any detailed account of the phenomena of the upper snows; but it may be well to note those general principles which every artist ought to keep in mind when he has to paint an Alp.

Snow is modified by the under forms of the hill in some sort as dress is by the anatomy of the human frame. And as no dress can be well laid on without conceiving the body beneath, so no Alp can be drawn unless its under form is conceived first, and its snow laid on afterwards.

Every high Alp has as much snow upon it as it can hold or carry: It is not, observe, a mere coating of snow of given depth throughout, but it is snow loaded on until the rocks can hold no more. The surplus does not fall in the winter, because, fastened by continual frost, the quantity of snow which an Alp can carry is greater than each single winter can bestow; it falls in the first mild days of spring in enormous avalanches. Afterwards the melting continues, gradually removing from all the steep rocks the small quantity of snow which was all they could hold, and leaving them black and bare among the accumulated fields of unknown depth, which occupy the capacious valleys and less inclined superficies of the mountain.

Hence it follows that the deepest snow does not take nor indicate the actual forms of the rocks on which it lies, but it hangs from peak to peak in unbroken and sweeping festoons, or covers whole groups of peaks, which afford it sufficient hold with vast, and unbroken domes: these festoons and domes being guided in their curves, and modified in size, by the violence and prevalent direction of the winter winds.

THE GLACIER

THE mountains have a peace which none disturb;
 The stars and clouds a course which none restrain;
 The wild sea-waves rejoice without a curb,
 And rest without a passion; but the chain
 Of Death, upon this ghastly cliff and chasm,
 Is broken evermore, to bind again,
 Nor lulls nor looses. Hark! a voice of pain
 Suddenly silenced; a quick-passing spasm,
 That startles rest, but grants not liberty—
 A shudder, or a struggle, or a cry—
 And then sepulchral stillness. Look on us,
 God! who hast given these hills their place of pride,
 If Death's captivity be sleepless thus,
 For those who sink to it unsanctified.

THE HESPERIDES

THE fable of the Hesperides had, it seems to me, in the Greek mind two distinct meanings; the first referring to natural phenomena, and the second to moral. The natural meaning of it I believe to have been this:—

The Garden of the Hesperides was supposed to exist in the westernmost part of the Cyrenaica; it was generally the expression for the beauty and luxuriant vegetation of the coast of Africa in that district. The centre of the Cyrenaica “is occupied by a moderately elevated table-land, whose edge runs parallel to the coast, to which it sinks down in a succession of terraces, clothed with verdure, intersected by mountain streams running through ravines filled with the richest vegetation; well watered by frequent rains, exposed to the cool sea breeze from the north, and sheltered by the mass of the mountain from the sands and hot winds of the Sahara.”

The Greek colony of Cyrene itself was founded ten miles

from the sea-shore, "in a spot backed by the mountains on the south, and thus sheltered from the fiery blasts of the desert; while at the height of about 1800 feet an inexhaustible spring bursts forth amidst luxuriant vegetation, and pours its waters down to the Mediterranean through a most beautiful ravine."

The nymphs of the west, or Hesperides, are therefore, I believe, as natural types, the representatives of the soft western winds and sunshine, which were in this district most favourable to vegetation. In this sense they are called daughters of Atlas and Hesperis, the western winds being cooled by the snow of Atlas. The dragon, on the contrary, is the representative of the Sahara wind, or simoom, which blew over the garden from above the hills on the south, and forbade all advance of cultivation beyond their ridge. Whether this was the physical meaning of the tradition in the Greek mind or not, there can be no doubt of its being Turner's first interpretation of it. A glance at the picture may determine this: a clear fountain being made the principal object in the foreground,—a bright and strong torrent in the distance,—while the dragon, wrapped in flame and whirlwind, watches from the top of the cliff.

But, both in the Greek mind and in Turner's, this natural meaning of the legend was a completely subordinate one. The moral significance of it lay far deeper. In the second, but principal sense, the Hesperides were not daughters of Atlas, nor connected with the winds of the west, but with its splendour. They are properly the nymphs of the sunset, and are the daughters of night, having many brothers and sisters, of whom I shall take Hesiod's account.

"And the night begat Doom, and short-withering Fate, and Death.

"And begat Sleep, and the company of Dreams, and Censure, and Sorrow.

"And the Hesperides, who keep the golden fruit beyond the mighty Sea.

"And the Destinies, and the Spirits of merciless punishment.

"And Jealousy, and Deceit, and Wanton Love; and Old Age, that fades away; and Strife, whose will endures."

We have not, I think, hitherto quite understood the

Greek feeling about those nymphs and their golden apples, coming as a light in the midst of cloud; between Censure, and Sorrow,—and the Destinies. We must look to the precise meaning of Hesiod's words, in order to get the force of the passage.

"The Night begat Doom;" that is to say, the doom of unforeseen accident—doom essentially of darkness.

"And short-withering Fate." Ill translated. I cannot do it better. It means especially the sudden fate which brings untimely end to all purpose, and cuts off youth and its promise: called, therefore (the epithet hardly ever leaving it), "black Fate."

"And Death." This is the universal, inevitable death, opposed to the interfering, untimely death. These three are named as the elder children. Hesiod pauses, and repeats the word "begat" before going on to number the others.

"And begat Sleep, and the company of Dreams."

"And *Censure*." "Momus," the Spirit of Blame—the spirit which desires to blame rather than to praise;—false, base, unhelpful, unholy judgment;—ignorant and blind, child of the Night.

"And Sorrow." Accurately, sorrow of mourning; the sorrow of the night, when no man can work; of the night that falls when what was the light of the eyes is taken from us; lamenting, sightless sorrow, without hope,—child of Night.

"And the Hesperides." We will come back to these.

"And the Destinies, and the Spirits of Merciless Punishment." These are the great Fates which have rule over conduct; the first fate spoken of (short-withering) is that which has rule over occurrence. These great Fates are Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos. Their three powers are,—Clotho's over the clue, the thread, or connecting energy,—that is, the conduct of life; Lachesis' over the lot—that is to say, the chance which warps, entangles, or bends the course of life. Atropos, inflexible, cuts the thread for ever.

"And Jealousy," especially the jealousy of Fortune, in balancing all good by evil. The Greeks had a peculiar dread of this form of fate.

"And Deceit, and sensual Love. And Old Age that fades, and Strife that endures;" that is to say, old age, which, growing not in wisdom, is marked only by its failing power

—by the gradual gaining of darkness on the faculties, and helplessness on the frame. Such age is the forerunner of true death—the child of Night. “And Strife,” the last and the mightiest, the nearest to man of the Night-children—blind leader of the blind.

Understanding thus whose sisters they are, let us consider of the Hesperides themselves—spoken of commonly as the “Singing Nymphs.” They are four.

Their names are, *Æglé*,—Brightness; *Erytheia*,—Blushing; *Hestia*,—the (spirit of the) Hearth; *Arethusa*,—the Ministering.

O English reader! hast thou ever heard of these fair and true daughters of Sunset, beyond the mighty sea?

And was it not well to trust to such keepers the guarding of the golden fruit which the earth gave to Juno at her marriage? Not fruit only: fruit on the tree, given by the earth, the great mother, to Juno (female power), at her marriage with Jupiter, or *ruling* manly power (distinguished from the tried and *agonising* strength of Hercules). I call Juno, briefly, female power. She is, especially, the goddess presiding over marriage, regarding the woman as the mistress of a household. *Vesta* (the goddess of the hearth¹) with *Ceres*, and *Venus*, are variously dominant over marriage, as the fulfilment of love; but Juno is pre-eminently the housewives’ goddess. She, therefore, represents, in her character, whatever good or evil may result from female ambition, or desire of power: and, as to a housewife, the earth presents its golden fruit to her, which she gives to two kinds of guardians. The wealth of the earth, as the source of household peace and plenty, is watched by the singing nymphs—the Hesperides. But, as the source of household sorrow and desolation, it is watched by the Dragon.

¹ Her name is also that of the Hesperid nymph; but I give the Hesperid her Greek form of name, to distinguish her from the goddess. The Hesperid *Arethusa* has the same subordinate relation to *Ceres*; and *Erytheia*, to *Venus*. *Æglé* signifies especially the spirit of brightness or cheerfulness; including even the subordinate idea of household neatness or cleanliness.

THE CLOUD-CHARIOTS

I

THE HEAPED CLOUD

BETWEEN the flocks of small countless clouds which occupy the highest heavens, and the grey undivided film of the true rain-cloud, form the fixed masses or torn fleeces, sometimes collected and calm, sometimes fiercely drifting, which are, nevertheless, known under one general name of cumulus, or heaped cloud.

The true cumulus, the most majestic of clouds, and almost the only one which attracts the notice of ordinary observers, is for the most part windless; the movement of its masses being solemn, continuous, inexplicable, a steady advance or retiring, as if they were animated by an inner will, or compelled by an unseen power. They appear to be peculiarly connected with heat, forming perfectly only in the afternoon, and melting away in the evening. Their noblest conditions are strongly electric, and connect themselves with storm-cloud and true thunder-cloud. When there is thunder in the air, they will form in cold weather, or early in the day.

I have never succeeded in drawing a cumulus. Its divisions of surface are grotesque and endless, as those of a mountain;—perfectly defined, brilliant beyond all power of colour, and transitory as a dream. Even Turner never attempted to paint them, any more than he did the snows of the high Alps.

Nor can I explain them any more than I can draw them. The ordinary account given of their structure is, I believe, that the moisture raised from the earth by the sun's heat becomes visible by condensation at a certain height in the colder air, that the level of the condensing point is that of the cloud's base, and that above it, the heaps are pushed up higher and higher as more vapour accumulates, till, towards evening, the supply beneath ceases; and at sunset, the fall of dew enables the surrounding atmosphere to absorb and melt them away. Very plausible. But it seems to me herein unexplained how the vapour is held together in those heaps. If the clear air about and above it has no aqueous vapour in it, or at least a much less quantity, why does not

the clear air keep pulling the cloud to pieces, eating it away, as steam is consumed in open air? Or, if any cause prevents such rapid devouring of it, why does not the aqueous vapour diffuse itself softly in the air like smoke, so that one would not know where the cloud ended? What should make it bind itself in those solid mounds, and stay so:—positive, fantastic, defiant, determined?

II

THE MOUNTAIN CLOUD

I BELIEVE the true cumulus is never seen in a great mountain region, at least never associated with hills. It is always broken up and modified by them. Boiling and rounded masses of vapour occur continually, as behind the Aiguille Dru, but the quiet, thoroughly defined, infinitely divided and modelled pyramid never develops itself. It would be very grand if one ever saw a great mountain peak breaking through the domed shoulders of a true cumulus; but this I have never seen.

Again, the true high cirri never cross a mountain in Europe. How often have I hoped to see an Alp rising through and above their level-laid and rippled fields! but those white harvest-fields are heaven's own. And, finally, even the low, level cirrus (used so largely in Martin's pictures) rarely crosses a mountain. If it does, it usually becomes slightly waved or broken, so as to destroy its character. Sometimes, however, at great distances, a very level bar of cloud will strike across a peak; but nearer, too much of the under surface of the field is seen, so that a well-defined bar across a peak, seen at a high angle, is of the greatest rarity.

The ordinary mountain cloud, therefore, if well defined, divides itself into two kinds: a broken condition of cumulus, grand in proportion as it is solid and quiet,—and a strange modification of drift-cloud, midway, as I said, between the helmet and the lee-side forms. The broken, quiet cumulus impressed Turner exceedingly when he first saw it on hills. He uses it, slightly exaggerating its definiteness, in all his early studies among the mountains of the Chartreuse, and very beautifully in the vignette of St. Maurice in Rogers's Italy.

CLOUDS AND MOUNTAINS; AND MODERN
PAINTERS

I SAID that all the Greeks spoke kindly about the clouds, except Aristophanes; and he, I am sorry to say (since his report is so unfavourable), is the only Greek who had studied them attentively. He tells us, first, that they are "great goddesses to idle men;" then, that they are "mistresses of disputings, and logic, and monstrosities, and noisy chattering;" declares that whoso believes in their divinity must first disbelieve in Jupiter and place supreme power in the hands of an unknown god "Whirlwind;" and, finally, he displays their influence over the mind of one of their disciples, in his sudden desire "to speak ingeniously concerning smoke."

There is, I fear, an infinite truth in this Aristophanic judgment applied to our modern cloud-worship. Assuredly, much of the love of mystery in our romances, our poetry, our art, and, above all, in our metaphysics, must come under that definition so long ago given by the great Greek, "speaking ingeniously concerning smoke." And much of the instinct, which, partially developed in painting, may be now seen throughout every mode of exertion of mind,—the easily encouraged doubt, easily excited curiosity, habitual agitation, and delight in the changing and the marvellous as opposed to the old quiet serenity of social custom and religious faith,—is again deeply defined in those few words, the "dethroning of Jupiter," the "coronation of the whirlwind."

Nor of whirlwind merely, but also of darkness or ignorance respecting all stable facts. That darkening of the foreground to bring out the white cloud, is, in one aspect of it, a type of the subjection of all plain and positive fact, to what is uncertain and unintelligible. And as we examine farther into the matter, we shall be struck by another great difference between the old and modern landscape, namely, that in the old no one ever thought of drawing anything but as well *as he could*. That might not be *well*, as we have seen in the case of rocks; but it was as well as he *could*, and always distinctly. Leaf, or stone, or animal, or man, it was equally

drawn with care and clearness, and its essential characters shown. If it was an oak tree, the acorns were drawn; if a flint pebble, its veins were drawn; if an arm of the sea, its fish were drawn; if a group of figures, their faces and dresses were drawn—to the very last subtlety of expression and end of thread that could be got into the space, far off or near. But now our ingenuity is all “concerning smoke.” Nothing is truly drawn but that; all else is vague, slight, imperfect; got with as little pains as possible. You examine your closest foreground, and find no leaves; your largest oak, and find no acorns; your human figure, and find a spot of red paint instead of a face; and in all this, again and again, the Aristophanic words come true, and the clouds seem to be “great goddesses to idle men.”

The next thing that will strike us, after this love of clouds, is the love of liberty. Whereas the mediæval was always shutting himself into castles, and behind fosses, and drawing brickwork neatly, and beds of flowers primly, our painters delight in getting to the open fields and moors; abhor all hedges and moats; never paint anything but free-growing trees, and rivers gliding “at their own sweet will;” eschew formality down to the smallest detail; break and displace the brickwork which the mediæval would have carefully cemented; leave unpruned the thickets he would have delicately trimmed; and, carrying the love of liberty even to license, and the love of wildness even to ruin, take pleasure at last in every aspect of age and desolation which emancipates the objects of nature from the government of men;—on the castle wall displacing its tapestry with ivy, and spreading, through the garden, the bramble for the rose.

Connected with this love of liberty we find a singular manifestation of love of mountains, and see our painters traversing the wildest places of the globe in order to obtain subjects with craggy foregrounds and purple distances. Some few of them remain content with pollards and flat land; but these are always men of third-rate order; and the leading masters, while they do not reject the beauty of the low grounds, reserve their highest powers to paint Alpine peaks or Italian promontories. And it is eminently noticeable, also, that this pleasure in the mountains is never mingled with fear, or tempered by a spirit of meditation, as

with the mediæval; but it is always free and fearless, brightly exhilarating, and wholly unreflective: so that the painter feels that his mountain foreground may be more consistently animated by a sportsman than a hermit; and our modern society in general goes to the mountains, not to fast, but to feast, and leaves their glaciers covered with chicken-bones and egg-shells.

Connected with this want of any sense of solemnity in mountain scenery, is a general profanity of temper in regarding all the rest of nature; that is to say, a total absence of faith in the presence of any deity therein. Whereas the mediæval never painted a cloud, but with the purpose of placing an angel in it; and a Greek never entered a wood without expecting to meet a god in it; *we* should think the appearance of an angel in the cloud wholly unnatural, and should be seriously surprised by meeting a god anywhere. Our chief ideas about the wood are connected with poaching. We have no belief that the clouds contain more than so many inches of rain or hail, and from our ponds and ditches expect nothing more divine than ducks and watercresses.

THE DARK AND BRIGHT AGES

THE title "Dark Ages," given to the mediæval centuries, is, respecting art, wholly inapplicable. They were, on the contrary, the bright ages; ours are the dark ones. I do not mean metaphysically, but literally. They were the ages of gold; ours are the ages of umber.

This is partly mere mistake in us; we build brown brick walls, and wear brown coats, because we have been blunderingly taught to do so, and go on doing so mechanically. There is, however, also some cause for the change in our own tempers. On the whole, these are much *sadder* ages than the early ones; not sadder in a noble and deep way, but in a dim, wearied way,—the way of ennui, and jaded intellect, and uncomfortableness of soul and body. The Middle Ages had their wars and agonies, but also intense delights. Their gold was dashed with blood; but ours is sprinkled with dust. Their life was inwoven with white and purple; ours is one seamless stuff of brown.

THE CLOUD-BALANCINGS

THAT mist which lies in the morning so softly in the valley, level and white, through which the tops of the trees rise as if through an inundation—why is *it* so heavy? and why does it lie so low, being yet so thin and frail that it will melt away utterly into splendour of morning, when the sun has shone on it but a few moments more? Those colossal pyramids, huge and firm, with outlines as of rocks, and strength to bear the beating of the high sun full on their fiery flanks—why are *they* so light,—their bases high over our heads, high over the heads of Alps? why will these melt away, not as the sun rises, but as he descends, and leave the stars of twilight clear, while the valley vapour gains again upon the earth like a shroud?

Or that ghost of a cloud, which steals by yonder clump of pines: nay, which does *not* steal by them, but haunts them, wreathing yet round them and yet—and yet, slowly: now falling in a fair waved line like a woman's veil; now fading, now gone: we look away for an instant, and look back, and it is again there. What has it to do with that clump of pines, that it broods by them and weaves itself among their branches, to and fro? Has it hidden a cloudy treasure among the moss at their roots, which it watches thus? Or has some strong enchanter charmed it into fond returning, or bound it fast within those bars of bough? And yonder filmy crescent, bent like an archer's bow above the snowy summit, the highest of all the hill,—that white arch which never forms but over the supreme crest,—how is it stayed there, repelled apparently from the snow—nowhere touching it, the clear sky seen between it and the mountain edge, yet never leaving it—poised as a white bird hovers over its nest?

Or those war-clouds that gather on the horizon, dragon-crested, tongued with fire;—how is their barbed strength bridled? what bits are these they are champing with their vaporous lips; flinging off flakes of black foam? Leagued leviathans of the Sea of Heaven, out of their nostrils goeth

smoke, and their eyes are like the eyelids of the morning. The sword of him that layeth at them cannot hold the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon. Where ride the captains of their armies? Where are set the measures of their march? Fierce murmurers, answering each other from morning until evening—what rebuke is this which has awed them into peace? what hand has reined them back by the way by which they came?

I know not if the reader will think at first that questions like these are easily answered. So far from it, I rather believe that some of the mysteries of the clouds never will be understood by us at all. "Knowest thou the balancings of the clouds?" Is the answer ever to be one of pride? "The wondrous works of Him which is perfect in knowledge?" Is *our* knowledge ever to be so?

It is one of the most discouraging consequences of the varied character of this work of mine, that I am wholly unable to take note of the advance of modern science. What has conclusively been discovered or observed about clouds, I know not; but by the chance inquiry possible to me I find no book which fairly states the difficulties of accounting for even the ordinary aspects of the sky. I shall, therefore, be able in this section to do little more than suggest inquiries to the reader, putting the subject in a clear form for him. All men accustomed to investigation will confirm me in saying that it is a great step when we are personally quite certain what we do *not* know.

First, then, I believe we do not know what makes clouds float. Clouds are water, in some fine form or another; but water is heavier than air, and the finest form you can give a heavy thing will not make it float in a light thing. *On* it, yes; as a boat: but *in* it, no. Clouds are not boats, nor boat-shaped, and they float in the air, not on the top of it. "Nay, but though unlike boats, may they not be like feathers? If out of quill substance there may be constructed eider-down, and out of vegetable tissue, thistle-down, both buoyant enough for a time, surely of water-tissue may be constructed also water-down, which will be buoyant enough for all cloudy purposes." Not so. Throw out your eider plumage in a calm day, and it will all come settling to the ground: slowly indeed, to aspect; but practically so fast

that all our finest clouds would be here in a heap about our ears in an hour or two, if they were only made of water-feathers. "But may they not be quill-feathers, and have air inside them? May not all their particles be minute little balloons?"

A balloon only floats when the air inside it is either specifically, or by heating, lighter than the air it floats in. If the cloud-feathers had warm air inside their quills, a cloud would be warmer than the air about it, which it is not (I believe). And if the cloud-feathers had hydrogen inside their quills, a cloud would be unwholesome for breathing, which it is not—at least so it seems to me.

"But may they not have nothing inside their quills?" Then they would rise, as bubbles do through water, just as certainly as, if they were solid feathers, they would fall. All our clouds would go up to the top of the air, and swim in eddies of cloud-foam.

"But is not that just what they do?" No. They float at different heights, and with definite forms, in the body of the air itself. If they rose like foam, the sky on a cloudy day would look like a very large flat glass of champagne seen from below, with a stream of bubbles (or clouds) going up as fast as they could to a flat foam-ceiling.

"But may they not be just so nicely mixed out of something and nothing, as to float where they are wanted?"

Yes: that is just what they not only may, but must be: only this way of mixing something and nothing is the very thing I want to explain or have explained, and cannot do it, nor get it done.

THE WHITE CLOUD

THE white cloud rose—the white cloud fled—
The peace of heaven returned in dew,
And soft and far the noontide shed
Its holiness of blue.

THE GRASS

I

THE Greek, we have seen, delighted in the grass for its usefulness; the mediæval, as also we moderns, for its colour and beauty. But both dwell on it as the *first* element of the lovely landscape; we saw its use in Homer, we see also that Dante thinks the righteous spirits of the heathen enough comforted in Hades by having even the *image* of green grass put beneath their feet; the happy resting-place in Purgatory has no other delight than its grass and flowers; and, finally, in the terrestrial paradise, the feet of Matilda pause where the Lethe stream first bends the blades of grass.

Consider a little what a depth there is in this great instinct of the human race. Gather a single blade of grass, and examine for a minute, quietly, its narrow sword-shaped strip of fluted green. Nothing, as it seems there, of notable goodness or beauty. A very little strength, and a very little tallness, and a few delicate long lines meeting in a point—not a perfect point neither, but blunt and unfinished, by no means a creditable or apparently much cared for example of Nature's workmanship; made, as it seems, only to be trodden on to-day, and to-morrow to be cast into the oven; and a little pale and hollow stalk, feeble and flaccid, leading down to the dull brown fibres of roots. And yet, think of it well, and judge whether of all the gorgeous flowers that beam in summer air, and of all strong and goodly trees, pleasant to the eyes or good for food,—stately palm and pine, strong ash and oak, scented citron, burdened vine,—there be any by man so deeply loved, by God so highly graced, as that narrow point of feeble green. It seems to me not to have been without a peculiar significance, that our Lord, when about to work the miracle which, of all that He showed, appears to have been felt by the multitude as the most impressive,—the miracle of the loaves,—commanded the people to sit down by companies "upon the green grass." He was about to feed them with the principal produce of earth and the sea, the simplest representations of the food of mankind.

He gave them the *seed* of the herb; He bade them sit down upon the herb itself, which was as great a gift, in its fitness for their joy and rest, as its perfect fruit, for their sustenance; thus, in this single order and act, when rightly understood, indicating for evermore how the Creator had entrusted the comfort, consolation, and sustenance of man to the simplest and most despised of all the leafy families of the earth. And well does it fulfil its mission.

II

Consider what we owe merely to the meadow grass, to the covering of the dark ground by that glorious enamel, by the companies of those soft, and countless, and peaceful spears. The fields! Follow but forth for a little time the thoughts of all that we ought to recognise in those words. All spring and summer is in them,—the walks by silent, scented paths,—the rests in noonday heat,—the joy of herds and flocks,—the power of all shepherd life and meditation,—the life of sunlight upon the world, falling in emerald streaks, and failing in soft blue shadows, where else it would have struck upon the dark mould, or scorching dust,—pastures beside the pacing brooks,—soft banks and knolls of lowly hills,—thymy slopes of down overlooked by the blue line of lifted sea,—crisp lawns all dim with early dew, or smooth in evening warmth of barred sunshine, dinted by happy feet, and softening in their fall the sound of loving voices: all these are summed in those simple words; and these are not all. We may not measure to the full the depth of this heavenly gift, in our own land; though still, as we think of it longer, the infinite of that meadow sweetness, Shakspeare's peculiar joy, would open on us more and more, yet we have it but in part. Go out, in the spring time, among the meadows that slope from the shores of the Swiss lakes to the roots of their lower mountains. There, mingled with the taller gentians and the white narcissus, the grass grows deep and free; and as you follow the winding mountain paths, beneath arching boughs all veiled and dim with blossom,—paths that for ever droop and rise over the green banks and mounds sweeping down in scented undulation, steep to the blue water, studded here and there with new-mown heaps, filling all the air with

fainter sweetness,—look up towards the higher hills, where the waves of everlasting green roll silently into their long inlets among the shadows of the pines; and we may, perhaps, at last know the meaning of those quiet words of the 147th Psalm, “He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.”

There are also several lessons symbolically connected with this subject, which we must not allow to escape us. Observe, the peculiar characters of the grass, which adapt it especially for the service of man, are its apparent *humility* and *cheerfulness*. Its humility, in that it seems created only for lowest service,—appointed to be trodden on, and fed upon. Its cheerfulness, in that it seems to exult under all kinds of violence and suffering. You roll it, and it is stronger the next day; you mow it, and it multiplies its shoots, as if it were grateful; you tread upon it, and it only sends up richer perfume. Spring comes, and it rejoices with all the earth,—glowing with variegated flame of flowers,—waving in soft depth of fruitful strength. Winter comes, and though it will not mock its fellow plants by growing then, it will not pine and mourn, and turn colourless or leafless as they. It is always green; and is only the brighter and gayer for the hoar-frost.

NATURE AND THE CHILD

I SUPPOSE there are few, among those who love Nature otherwise than by profession and at second-hand, who look not back to their youngest and least-learned days as those of the most intense, superstitious, insatiable, and beatific perception of her splendours. And the bitter decline of this glorious feeling, though many note it not, partly owing to the cares and weight of manhood, which leave them not the time nor the liberty to look for their lost treasure, and partly to the human and divine affections which are appointed to take its place, yet has formed the subject, not indeed of lamentation, but of holy thankfulness for the witness it bears to the immortal origin and end of our nature, to one whose authority is almost without appeal in all questions relating to the influence of external things upon the pure human soul.

Heaven lies about us in our infancy,—
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy.
But he beholds the light, and whence it flow
He sees it in his joy.
The youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is nature's priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended.
At length the Man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day.

And if it were possible for us to recollect all the unaccountable and happy instincts of the careless time, and to reason upon them with the maturer judgment, we might arrive at more rapid and right results than either the philosophy or the sophisticated practice of art have yet attained. But we lose the perceptions before we are capable of methodising or comparing them.

One, however, of these child instincts, I believe that few forget, the emotion, namely, caused by all open ground, or lines of any spacious kind against the sky, behind which there might be conceived the Sea. It is an emotion more pure than that caused by the Sea itself, for I recollect distinctly running down behind the banks of a high beach to get their land line cutting against the sky, and receiving a more strange delight from this than from the sight of the Ocean: I am not sure that this feeling is common to all children (or would be common, if they were all in circumstances admitting it), but I have ascertained it to be frequent among those who possess the most vivid sensibilities for Nature; and I am certain that the modification of it, which belongs to our after years, is common to all, the love, namely, of a light distance appearing over a comparatively dark horizon. This I have tested too frequently to be mistaken by offering to indifferent spectators forms of equal abstract beauty in half tint, relieved, the one against dark sky, the other against a bright distance. The preference is invariably given to the latter, and it is very certain that this preference arises not from any supposition of there being greater truth in this than the other, for the same preference is unhesitatingly accorded to the same effect in Nature herself. Whatever beauty there may result from effects of light on foreground objects, from the dew of the grass, the flash of

the cascade, the glitter of the birch trunk, or the fair daylight hues of darker things (and joyfulness there is in all of them), there is yet a light which the eye invariably seeks with a deeper feeling of the beautiful, the light of the declining or breaking day, and the flakes of scarlet cloud burning like watch fires in the green sky of the horizon; a deeper feeling, I say, not perhaps more acute, but having more of spiritual hope and longing, less of animal and present life, more manifest, invariably, in those of more serious and determined mind (I use the word serious, not as being opposed to cheerful, but to trivial and volatile), but I think, marked and un-failing even in those of the least thoughtful dispositions. I am willing to let it rest on the determination of every reader, whether the pleasure which he has received from these effects of calm and luminous distance be not the most singular and memorable of which he has been conscious, whether all that is dazzling in colour, perfect in form, gladdening in expression, be not of evanescent and shallow appealing, when compared with the still small voice of the level twilight behind purple hills, or the scarlet arch of dawn over the dark troublous-edged sea.

THE MONTHS

I

FROM your high dwellings in the realms of snow
And cloud, where many an avalanche's fall
Is heard resounding from the mountain's brow,
Come, ye cold winds! at January's call,
On whistling wings; and with white flakes bestrew
The earth, till February's reign restore
The race of torrents to their wonted flow,
Whose waves shall stand in silent ice no more;
But, lashed by March's maddened winds, shall roar
With voice of ire, and beat the rocks on every shore.

II

Bow down your heads, ye flowers! in gentle guise,
Before the dewy rain that April sheds,

Whose sun shines through her clouds with quick surprise,
 Shedding soft influences on your heads;
 And wreath ye round the rosy month that flies
 To scatter perfumes on the path of June:
 Till July's sun upon the mountains rise
 Triumphant, and the wan and weary moon
 Mingle her cold beams with the burning lume
 That Sirius shoots through all the dreary midnight gloom.

III

Rejoice! ye fields, rejoice! and wave with gold,
 When August round her precious gifts is flinging.
 Lo! the crushed wain is slowly homeward rolled;
 The sunburnt reapers jocund lays are singing:
 September's steps her juicy stores unfold,
 If the Spring blossoms have not blushed in vain:
 October's foliage yellows with his cold:
 In rattling showers dark November's rain,
 From every stormy cloud, descends amain,
 Till keen December's snows close up the year again.

BOOKS

ALL books are divisible into two classes, the books of the hour, and the books of all time. Mark this distinction—it is not one of quality only. It is not merely the bad book that does not last, and the good one that does. It is a distinction of species. There are good books for the hour, and good ones for all time; bad books for the hour, and bad ones for all time. I must define the two kinds before I go farther.

The good book of the hour, then,—I do not speak of the bad ones—is simply the useful or pleasant talk of some person whom you cannot otherwise converse with, printed for you. Very useful often, telling you what you need to know; very pleasant often, as a sensible friend's present talk would be. These bright accounts of travels; good-humoured and witty discussions of question; lively or pathetic story-telling in the form of novel; firm fact-telling, by the real agents concerned in the events of passing history;

—all these books of the hour, multiplying among us as education becomes more general, are a peculiar characteristic and possession of the present age: we ought to be entirely thankful for them, and entirely ashamed of ourselves if we make no good use of them. But we make the worst possible use, if we allow them to usurp the place of true books: for, strictly speaking, they are not books at all, but merely letters or newspapers in good print. Our friend's letter may be delightful, or necessary, to-day: whether worth keeping or not, is to be considered. The newspaper may be entirely proper at breakfast time, but assuredly it is not reading for all day. So, though bound up in a volume, the long letter which gives you so pleasant an account of the inns, and roads, and weather last year at such a place, or which tells you that amusing story, or gives you the real circumstances of such and such events, however valuable for occasional reference, may not be, in the real sense of the word, a "book" at all, nor, in the real sense, to be "read." A book is essentially not a talked thing, but a written thing; and written, not with the view of mere communication, but of permanence. The book of talk is printed only because its author cannot speak to thousands of people at once; if he could, he would—the volume is mere *multiplication* of his voice. You cannot talk to your friend in India; if you could, you would; you write instead: that is mere *conveyance* of voice. But a book is written, not to multiply the voice merely, not to carry it merely, but to preserve it. The author has something to say which he perceives to be true and useful or helpfully beautiful. So far as he knows, no one has yet said it; so far as he knows, no one else can say it. He is bound to say it, clearly and melodiously if he may; clearly, at all events. In the sum of his life he finds this to be the thing, or group of things, manifest to him;—this the piece of true knowledge, or sight, which his share of sunshine and earth has permitted him to seize. He would fain set it down for ever; engrave it on rock, if he could; saying, "This is the best of me; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved, and hated, like another; my life was as the vapour, and is not; but this I saw and knew: this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory." That is his "writing;" it is, in his small human way, and with whatever degree of true in-

spiration is in him, his inscription, or scripture. That is a "Book."

Perhaps you think no books were ever so written?

But, again, I ask you, do you at all believe in honesty, or at all in kindness? or do you think there is never any honesty or benevolence in wise people? None of us, I hope, are so unhappy as to think that. Well, whatever bit of a wise man's work is honestly and benevolently done, that bit is his book, or his piece of art. It is mixed always with evil fragments—ill-done, redundant, affected work. But if you read rightly, you will easily discover the true bits, and those *are* the book.

BOOKS AND WORDS

WHEN you come to a good book, you must ask yourself, "Am I inclined to work as an Australian miner would? Are my pickaxes and shovels in good order, and am I in good trim myself, my sleeves well up to the elbow, and my breath good, and my temper?" And, keeping the figure a little longer, even at cost of tiresomeness, for it is a thoroughly useful one, the metal you are in search of being the author's mind or meaning, his words are as the rock which you have to crush and smelt in order to get at it. And your pickaxes are your own care, wit, and learning; your smelting furnace is your own thoughtful soul. Do not hope to get at any good author's meaning without those tools and that fire; often you will need sharpest, finest chiselling, and patientest fusing, before you can gather one grain of the metal.

And, therefore, first of all, I tell you, earnestly and authoritatively (I *know* I am right in this), you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable—nay, letter by letter. For though it is only by reason of the opposition of letters in the function of signs, to sounds in function of signs, that the study of books is called "literature," and that a man versed in it is called, by the consent of nations, a man of letters instead of a man of books, or of words, you may yet connect with that accidental nomenclature this real principle

—that you might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough), and remain an utterly “illiterate,” uneducated person; but that if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter,—that is to say, with real accuracy,—you are for evermore in some measure an educated person. The entire difference between education and non-education (as regards the merely intellectual part of it), consists in this accuracy. A well-educated gentleman may not know many languages,—may not be able to speak any but his own,—may have read very few books. But whatever language he knows, he knows precisely; whatever word he pronounces he pronounces rightly; above all, he is learned in the *peerage* of words; knows the words of true descent and ancient blood, at a glance, from words of modern canaille; remembers all their ancestry—their inter-marriages, distantest relationships, and the extent to which they were admitted, and offices they held, among the national noblesse of words at any time, and in any country. But an uneducated person may know by memory any number of languages, and talk them all, and yet truly know not a word of any,—not a word even of his own. An ordinarily clever and sensible seaman will be able to make his way ashore at most ports; yet he has only to speak a sentence of any language to be known for an illiterate person: so also the accent, or turn of expression of a single sentence will at once mark a scholar. And this is so strongly felt, so conclusively admitted, by educated persons, that a false accent or a mistaken syllable is enough, in the parliament of any civilised nation, to assign to a man a certain degree of inferior standing for ever. And this is right; but it is a pity that the accuracy insisted on is not greater, and required to a serious purpose. It is right that a false Latin quantity should excite a smile in the House of Commons; but it is wrong that a false English meaning should *not* excite a frown there. Let the accent of words be watched, by all means, but let their meaning be watched more closely still, and fewer will do the work. A few words well chosen and well distinguished, will do work that a thousand cannot, when every one is acting, equivocally, in the function of another. Yes; and words, if they are not watched, will do deadly work sometimes.

WORDS

Now, in order to deal with words rightly, this is the habit you must form. Nearly every word in your language has been first a word of some other language—of Saxon, German, French, Latin, or Greek (not to speak of eastern and primitive dialects). And many words have been all these;—that is to say, have been Greek first, Latin next, French or German next, and English last: undergoing a certain change of sense and use on the lips of each nation; but retaining a deep vital meaning which all good scholars feel in employing them, even at this day. If you do not know the Greek alphabet, learn it; young or old—girl or boy—whoever you may be, if you think of reading seriously (which, of course, implies that you have some leisure at command), learn your Greek alphabet; then get good dictionaries of all these languages, and whenever you are in doubt about a word, hunt it down patiently. Read Max Müller's lectures thoroughly, to begin with; and, after that, never let a word escape you that looks suspicious. It is severe work; but you will find it, even at first, interesting, and at last, endlessly amusing. And the general gain to your character, in power and precision, will be quite incalculable.

Mind, this does not imply knowing, or trying to know, Greek, or Latin, or French. It takes a whole life to learn any language perfectly. But you can easily ascertain the meanings through which the English word has passed; and those which in a good writer's work it must still bear.

DANTE'S MOUNTAIN SCENERY

To Dante, mountains are inconceivable except as great broken stones or crags; all their broad contours and undulations seem to have escaped his eye. It is, indeed, with his usual undertone of symbolic meaning that he describes the great broken stones, and the fall of the shattered mountain, as the entrance to the circle appointed for the punish-

ment of the violent; meaning that the violent and cruel, notwithstanding all their iron hardness of heart, have no true strength, but, either by earthquake, or want of support, fall at last into desolate ruin, naked, loose, and shaking under the tread. But in no part of the poem do we find allusion to mountains in any other than a stern light; nor the slightest evidence that Dante cared to look at them. From that hill of San Miniato, whose steps he knew so well, the eye commands, at the farther extremity of the Val d'Arno, the whole purple range of the mountains of Carrara, peaked and mighty, seen always against the sunset light in silent outline, the chief forms that rule the scene as twilight fades away. By this vision Dante seems to have been wholly unmoved, and, but for Lucan's mention of Aruns at Luna, would seemingly not have spoken of the Carrara hills in the whole course of his poem: when he does allude to them, he speaks of their white marble, and their command of stars and sea, but has evidently no regard for the hills themselves. There is not a single phrase or syllable throughout the poem which indicates such a regard. Ugolino, in his dream, seemed to himself to be in the mountains, "by cause of which the Pisan cannot see Lucca;" and it is impossible to look up from Pisa to that hoary slope without remembering the awe that there is in the passage; nevertheless, it was as a hunting-ground only that he remembered those hills. Adam of Brescia, tormented with eternal thirst, remembers the hills of Romena, but only for the sake of their sweet waters:

"The rills that glitter down the grassy slopes
Of Casentino, making fresh and soft
The banks whereby they glide to Arno's stream,
Stand ever in my view."

And, whenever hills are spoken of as having any influence on character, the repugnance to them is still manifest; they are always causes of rudeness or cruelty:

"But that ungrateful and malignant race,
Who in old times came down from Fesole,
Ay, and still smack of their rough mountain flint,
Will, for thy good deeds, show thee enmity.
Take heed thou cleanse thee of their ways."

So again—

"As one *mountain-bred*,
Rugged, and clownish, if some city's walls
He chance to enter, round him stares agape."

Finally, although the Carrara mountains are named as having command of the stars and sea, the *Alps* are never specially mentioned but in bad weather, or snow. On the sand of the circle of the blasphemers—

“ Fell slowly wafting down
Dilated flakes of fire, as flakes of snow
On Alpine summit, when the wind is hushed.”

So the Paduans have to defend their town and castles against inundations,

“ Ere the genial warmth be felt,
On Chiarentana's top.”

The clouds of anger, in Purgatory, can only be figured to the reader who has

“ On an Alpine height been ta'en by cloud,
Through which thou sawest no better than the mole
Doth through opacous membrane.”

And in approaching the second branch of Lethe, the seven ladies pause,—

“ Arriving at the verge
Of a dim umbrage hoar, such as is seen
Beneath green leaves and gloomy branches oft
To overbrow a bleak and Alpine cliff.”

Truly, it is unfair of Dante, that when he is going to use snow for a lovely image, and speak of it as melting away under heavenly sunshine, he must needs put it on the Apennines, not on the Alps:

“ As snow that lies
Amidst the living rafters, on the back
Of Italy, congealed, when drifted high
And closely piled by rough Slavonian blasts,
Breathe but the land whereon no shadow falls,
And straightway, melting, it distils away,
Like a fire-wasted taper; thus was I,
Without a sigh, or tear, consumed in heart.”

The reader will thank me for reminding him, though out of its proper order, of the exquisite passage of Scott which we have to compare with this:

“ As snow upon the mountain's breast
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Sweet Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the monarch's feet she lay.”

Examine the context of this last passage, and its beauty is quite beyond praise; but note the northern love of rocks in the very first words I have to quote from Scott, "The rock that gave it rest." Dante could not have thought of his "cut rocks" as giving rest even to snow. He must put it on the pine branches, if it is to be at peace.

There is only one more point to be noticed in the Dantesque landscape; namely, the feeling entertained by the poet towards the sky. And the love of mountains is so closely connected with the love of clouds, the sublimity of both depending much on their association, that having found Dante regardless of the Carrara mountains as seen from San Miniato, we may well expect to find him equally regardless of the clouds in which the sun sank behind them. Accordingly, we find that his only pleasure in the sky depends on its "white clearness,"—that turning into "*bianca aspetto di cilestro*" which is so peculiarly characteristic of fine days in Italy. His pieces of pure pale light are always exquisite. In the dawn on the purgatorial mountain, first, in its pale white, he sees the "*tremola della marina*"—trembling of the sea; then it becomes vermilion; and at last, near sunrise, orange. These are precisely the changes of a calm and perfect dawn. The scenery of Paradise begins with "Day added to day," the light of the sun so flooding the heavens, that "never rain nor river made lake so wide;" and throughout the Paradise all the beauty depends on spheres of light, or stars, never on clouds. But the pit of the Inferno is at first sight obscure, deep, and so *cloudy* that at its bottom nothing could be seen. When Dante and Virgil reach the marsh in which the souls of those who have been angry and sad in their lives are for ever plunged, they find it covered with thick fog; and the condemned souls say to them,—

" We once were sad,
In the *sweet air*, made gladsome by the sun.
Now in these murky settlings are we sad."

Even the angel crossing the marsh to help them is annoyed by this bitter marsh smoke, "*fummo acerbo*," and continually sweeps it with his hand from before his face.

Anger, on the purgatorial mountain, is in like manner imaged, because of its blindness and wildness, by the Alpine

clouds. As they emerge from its mist they see the white light radiated through the fading folds of it; and, except this appointed cloud, no other can touch the mountain of purification.

“ Tempest none, shower, hail, or snow,
Hoar-frost, or dewy moistness, higher falls,
Than that brief scale of threefold steps. Thick clouds,
Nor scudding rack, are ever seen, swift glance
Ne’er lightens, nor Thaumantian iris gleams.”

Dwell for a little while on this intense love of Dante for light,—taught, as he is at last by Beatrice, to gaze on the sun itself like an eagle,—and endeavour to enter into his equally intense detestation of all mist, rack of cloud, or dimness of rain; and then consider with what kind of temper he would have regarded a landscape of Copley Fielding’s or passed a day in the Highlands. He has, in fact, assigned to the souls of the gluttonous no other punishment in the Inferno than perpetuity of Highland weather:

“ Showers
Ceaseless, accursed, heavy and cold, unchanged
For ever, both in kind and in degree,—
Large hail, discoloured water, sleety flaw,
Through the dim midnight air streamed down amain.”

THE HILLS OF CARRARA¹

I

AMIDST a vale of springing leaves,
Where spreads the vine its wandering root,
And cumbrous fall the autumnal sheaves,
And olives shed their sable fruit,
And gentle winds and waters never mute
Make of young boughs and pebbles pure
One universal lute,
And bright birds, through the myrtle copse obscure,
Pierce, with quick notes, and plumage dipped in dew,
The silence and the shade of each lulled avenue,—

¹ The mountains of Carrara, from which nearly all the marble now used in sculpture is derived, form by far the finest piece of hill scenery I know in Italy. They rise out of valleys of exquisite richness, being themselves singularly desolate, magnificent in form, and noble in elevation; but without forests on their flanks, and without one blade of grass on their summits.

II

Far in the depths of voiceless skies,
Where calm and cold the stars are strewed,
The peaks of pale Carrara rise.
Nor sound of storm, nor whirlwind rude,
Can break their chill of marble solitude;
The crimson lightnings round their crest
May hold their fiery feud—
They hear not, nor reply; their chasmèd rest
No flowret decks, nor herbage green, nor breath
Of moving thing can change their atmosphere of death.

III

But far beneath, in folded sleep,
Faint forms of heavenly life are laid,
With pale brows and soft eyes, that keep
Sweet peace of unawakened shade;
Whose wreathèd limbs, in robes of rock arrayed,
Fall like white waves on human thought,
In fitful dreams displayed;
Deep through their secret homes of slumber sought,
They rise immortal, children of the day,
Gleaming with godlike forms on earth, and her decay.

IV

Yes, where the bud hath brightest germ,
And broad the golden blossoms glow,
There glides the snake, and works the worm,
And black the earth is laid below.
Ah! think not thou the souls of men to know,
By outward smiles in wildness worn:
The words that jest at woe
Spring not less lightly, though the heart be torn—
The mocking heart, that scarcely dares confess,
Even to itself, the strength of its own bitterness.

V

Nor deem that they whose words are cold,
Whose brows are dark, have hearts of steel;
The couchant strength, untraced, untold,

Of thoughts they keep, and throbs they feel,
May need an answering music to unseal;
Who knows what waves may stir the silent sea,
Beneath the low appeal,
From distant shores, of winds unfelt by thee?
What sounds may wake within the winding shell,
Responsive to the charm of those who touch it well!

RAINBOWS AND LIBERTY

YESTERDAY afternoon I called on Mr. H. C. Sorby, to see some of the results of an inquiry he has been following all last year, into the nature of the colouring matter of leaves and flowers.

You most probably have heard (at all events, may with little trouble hear) of the marvellous power which chemical analysis has received in recent discoveries respecting the laws of light.

My friend showed me the rainbow of the rose, and the rainbow of the violet, and the rainbow of the hyacinth, and the rainbow of forest leaves being born, and the rainbow of forest leaves dying.

And, last, he showed me the rainbow of blood. It was but the three-hundredth part of a grain, dissolved in a drop of water: and it cast its measured bars, for ever recognisable now to human sight, on the chord of the seven colours. And no drop of that red rain can now be shed, so small as that the stain of it cannot be known, and the voice of it heard out of the ground.

But the seeing these flower colours, and the iris of blood together with them, just while I was trying to gather into brief space the right laws of war, brought vividly back to me my dreaming fancy of long ago, that even the trees of the earth were "capable of a kind of sorrow, as they opened their innocent leaves in vain for men; and along the dells of England her beeches cast their dappled shades only where the outlaw drew his bow, and the king rode his careless chase; amidst the fair defiles of the Apennines, the twisted olive-trunks hid the ambushes of treachery, and on their meadows,

day by day, the lilies which were white at the dawn were washed with crimson at sunset."

And so also now this chance word of the daily journal,¹ about the sirens, brought in my mind the divine passage in the *Cratylus* of Plato, about the place of the dead:—

"And none of those who dwell there desire to depart thence,—no, not even the Sirens; but even they, the seducers, are there themselves beguiled, and they who lulled all men, themselves laid to rest—they, and all others—such sweet songs doth death know how to sing to them."

So also the Hebrew.

"And desire shall fail, because man goeth to his long home." For you know I told you the Sirens were not pleasures, but desires; being always represented in old Greek art as having human faces, with birds' wings and feet, and sometimes with eyes upon their wings; and there are not two more important passages in all literature, respecting the laws of labour and of life, than those two great descriptions of the Sirens in Homer and Plato,—the Sirens of death, and Sirens of eternal life, representing severally the earthly and heavenly desires of men; the heavenly desires singing to the motion of circles of the spheres, and the earthly on the rocks of fatallest shipwreck. A fact which may indeed be regarded "sentimentally," but it is also a profoundly important politico-economical one.

And now for Shakespeare's song.

You will find if you look back to the analysis of it, given in *Munera Pulveris*, that the whole play of the *Tempest* is an allegorical representation of the powers of true, and therefore spiritual, Liberty, as opposed to true, and therefore carnal and brutal, Slavery. There is not a sentence nor a rhyme, sung or uttered by Ariel or Caliban, throughout the play, which has not this under-meaning.

Now the fulfilment of all human liberty is in the peaceful inheritance of the earth, with its "herb-yielding seed, and fruit tree yielding fruit" after this kind; the pasture, or arable land, and the blossoming, or wooded and fruited, land uniting the final elements of life and peace, for body and soul. Therefore, we have the two great Hebrew forms of benediction,

¹ A passage in the *Pall Mall Gazette* on Political Economy, referring to Ricardo and Ruskin.

"His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk," and again, "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good." And as the work of war and sin has always been the devastation of this blossoming earth, whether by spoil or idleness, so the work of peace and virtue is also that of the first day of Paradise, to "Dress it and to keep it." And that will always be the song of perfectly accomplished Liberty, in her industry, and rest, and shelter from troubled thoughts in the calm of the fields, and gaining, by migration, the long summer's day from the shortening twilight:—

Where the bee sucks, there suck I;
 In a cowslip's bell I lie:
 There I couch when owls do cry.
 On the bat's back I do fly
 After summer merrily:
 Merrily, merrily, shall I live now
 Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

And the security of this treasure to all the poor, and not the ravage of it down the valleys of the Shenandoah, is indeed the true warrior's work. But, that they may be able to restrain vice rightly, soldiers must themselves be first in virtue; and that they may be able to compel labour sternly, they must themselves be first in toil, and their spears, like Jonathan's at Beth-aven, enlighteners of the eyes.

AN ALPINE GARLAND

I

THE ALPS SEEN FROM MARENGO

THE glory of a cloud—without its wane;
 The stillness of the earth—but not its gloom;
 The loveliness of life—without its pain;
 The peace—but not the hunger—of the tomb!
 Ye Pyramids of God! around whose bases
 The sea foams noteless in his narrow cup;
 And the unseen movements of the earth send up
 A murmur which your lulling snow effaces
 Like the deer's footsteps. Thrones imperishable!

About whose adamantine steps the breath
 Of dying generations vanisheth,
 Less cognisable than clouds; and dynasties,
 Less glorious and more feeble than the array
 Of your frail glaciers, unregarded rise,
 Totter and vanish. In the uncounted day,
 When earth shall tremble as the trump unwraps
 Their sheets of slumber from the crumbling dead,
 And the quick, thirsty fire of judgment laps
 The loud sea from the hollow of his bed—
 Shall not your God spare *you*, to whom He gave
 No share nor shadow of man's crime, or fate;
 Nothing to render, nor to expiate;
 Untainted by his life—untrusted with his grave?

II

MONT BLANC REVISITED

O MOUNT beloved, mine eyes again
 Behold the twilight's sanguine stain
 Along thy peaks expire.
 O Mount beloved, thy frontier waste
 I seek with a religious haste
 And reverent desire.

They meet me, 'midst thy shadows cold,
 Such thoughts as holy men of old
 Amid the desert found;—
 Such gladness, as in Him they felt
 Who with them through the darkness dwelt,
 And compassed all around.

Ah! happy, if His will were so,
 To give me manna here for snow,
 And by the torrent side
 To lead me as He leads His flocks
 Of wild deer through the lonely rocks
 In peace, unterrified;

Since from the things that trustful rest,
 The partridge on her purple nest,

The marmot in his den,
God wins a worship more resigned,
A purer praise than He can find
Upon the lips of men.

Alas for man! who hath no sense
Of gratefulness nor confidence,
But still rejects and raves,
That all God's love can hardly win
One soul from taking pride in sin,
And pleasures over graves.

But teach me, God, a milder thought,
Lest I, of all Thy Blood has bought,
Least honourable be;
And this that moves me to condemn
Be rather want of love for them,
Than jealousy for Thee.

III

THE ARVE AT CLUSE

HAST thou no rest, oh, stream perplexed and pale!
That thus forget'st, in thine unhallowed rage,
The pureness of thy mountain parentage?
Unprofitable power! that dost assail
The shore thou should'st refresh, and weariest
The boughs thou shouldest water; whose unrest
Strews thy white whirl with leaves untimely frail,
Fierce river! to whose strength—whose avarice—
The rocks resist not, nor the vales suffice,
Cloven and wasted; fearfully I trace
Backward thy borders, image of my race!
Who born, like thee, near Heaven, have lost, like thee,
Their heritage of peace. Roll on, thus proud,
Impatient, and pollute! I would not see
Thy force less fatal or thy path less free;
But I would cast upon thy waves the cloud
Of passions that are like thee, and baptise
My spirit from its tumult at this Gate

Of Glory, that my lifted heart and eyes,
 Purged even by thee from things that desolate
 Or darken, may receive, divinely given,
 The radiance of that world where all is stilled
 In worship, and the sacred mountains build
 Their brightness of stability in Heaven.

IV

MONT BLANC

HE who looks upward from the vale by night,
 When the clouds vanish and the winds are stayed,
 For ever finds, in Heaven's serenest height,
 A space that hath no stars—a mighty shade—
 A vacant form, immovably displayed,
 Steep in the unstable vault. The planets droop
 Behind it; the fleece-laden moonbeams fade;
 The midnight constellations, troop by troop,
 Depart and leave it with the dawn alone;
 Uncomprehended yet, and hardly known
 For finite, but by what it takes away
 Of the east's purple deepening into day.
 Still, for a time, it keeps its awful rest,
 Cold as the prophet's pile on Carmel's crest:
 Then falls the fire of God.—Far off or near,
 Earth and the sea, wide worshipping, descry
 That burning altar in the morning sky;
 And the strong pines their utmost ridges rear,
 Moved like a host, in angel-guided fear
 And sudden faith. So stands the Providence
 Of God around us; mystery of Love!
 Obscure, unchanging, darkness and defence,—
 Impenetrable and unmoved above
 The valley of our watch; but which shall be
 The light of Heaven hereafter, when the strife
 Of wandering stars, that rules this night of life,
 Dies in the dawning of Eternity.

V

WRITTEN AMONG THE BASSES ALPES

It is not among mountain-scenery that the human intellect usually takes its finest temper or receives its highest development; but it is at least there that we find a consistent energy of mind and body, compelled by severer character of agencies to be resisted and hardships to be endured; and it is there that we must seek for the last remnants of patriarchal simplicity and patriotic affection—the few rock fragments of manly character that are yet free from the lichenous stain of over-civilisation. It must always, therefore, be with peculiar pain that we find, as in the district to which the following verses allude, the savageness and seclusion of mountain-life without its force and faithfulness; and all the indolence and sensuality of the most debased cities of Europe, without the polish to disguise, the temptation to excuse, or the softness of natural scenery to harmonise with them.

“Why stand ye here all the day idle?”

HAVE you in heaven no hope—on earth no care—

No foe in hell—ye things of styè and stall,
That congregate like flies, and make the air

Rank with your fevered sloth—that hourly call
The sun, which should your servant be, to bear

Dread witness on you, with uncounted wane
And unregarded rays, from peak to peak

Of piny-gnomoned mountain moved in vain?
Behold, the very shadows that ye seek

For slumber, write along the wasted wall
Your condemnation. They forget not, they,

Their ordered function, and determined fall,
Nor useless perish. But *you* count your day

By sins, and write your difference from clay
In bonds you break, and laws you disobey.

God! who hast given the rocks their fortitude,
The sap unto the forests, and their food

And vigour to the busy tenantry

Of happy, soulless things that wait on Thee,
Hast Thou no blessing where Thou gav'st Thy blood?

Wilt Thou not make Thy fair creation whole?
Behold and visit this Thy vine for good—

Breathe in this human dust its living soul.

VI

A WALK IN CHAMOUNI

TOGETHER on the valley, white and sweet,
 The dew and silence of the morning lay:
 Only the tread of my disturbing feet
 Did break, with printed shade and patient beat,
 The crispèd stillness of the meadow way;
 And frequent mountain waters, welling up
 In crystal gloom beneath some mouldering stone,
 Curdled in many a flower-enamelled cup,
 Whose soft and purple border, scarcely blown,
 Budded beneath their touch, and trembled to their tone.

The fringed branches of the swinging pines
 Closed o'er my path; a darkness in the sky,
 That barred its dappled vault with rugged lines,
 And silver network ¹—interwoven signs
 Of dateless age and deathless infancy;
 Then through their aisles a motion and a brightness
 Kindled and shook—the weight of shade they bore
 On their broad arms was lifted by the lightness
 Of a soft, shuddering wind, and what they wore
 Of jewelled dew, was strewed about the forest floor.

That thrill of gushing wind and glittering rain
 Onward amid the woodland hollows went;
 And bade by turns the drooping boughs complain
 O'er the brown earth, that drank in lightless stain
 The beauty of their burning ornament;
 And then the roar of an enormous river
 Came on the intermittent air uplifted;
 Broken with haste, I saw its sharp waves shiver,
 And its wild weight in white disorder drifted,
 Where by its beaten shore the rocks lay heaped and
 rifted.

¹ The white mosses on the melèze, when the tree is very old, are singularly beautiful, resembling frost-work of silver.

But yet unshattered, from an azure arch ¹

Came forth the nodding waters, wave by wave,
In silver lines of modulated march,
Through a broad desert, which the frost-winds parch
Like fire, and the resounding ice-falls pave
With pallid ruin—wastes of rock—that share
Earth's calm and ocean's fruitlessness—Undone
The work of ages lies—through whose despair
Their swift procession dancing in the sun,
The white and whirling waves pass mocking one by one.

And with their voice—unquiet melody—

Is filled the hollow of their mighty portal,
As shells are with remembrance of the sea;
So might the eternal arch of Eden be
With angels' wail for those whose crowns immortal
The grave-dust dimmed in passing. There are here,
With azure wings, and scimitars of fire,
Forms as of Heaven, to guard the gate, and rear
Their burning arms afar—a boundless choir
Beneath the sacred shafts of many a mountain spire.

Countless as clouds, dome, prism, and pyramid

Pierced through the mist of morning scarce withdrawn,
Signing the gloom like beacon-fires, half hid
By storm—part quenched in billows—or forbid
Their function by the fullness of the dawn:
And melting mists and threads of purple rain
Fretted the fair sky where the east was red,
Gliding like ghosts along the voiceless plain,
In rainbow hues around its coldness shed,
Like thoughts of loving hearts that haunt about the dead.

And over these, as pure as if the breath

Of God had called them newly into light,
Free from all stamp of sin, or shade of death,
With which the old creation travaileth,
Rose the white mountains, through the infinite
Of the calm, concave heaven; inly bright

¹ Source of the Arveron.

With lustre everlasting and intense;
Serene and universal as the night,
But yet more solemn with pervading sense
Of the deep stillness of Omnipotence.

Deep stillness! for the throbs of human thought,
Count not the lonely night that pauses here;
And the white arch of morning findeth not,
By chasm or alp, a spirit or a spot
Its call can waken or its beams can cheer:
There are no eyes to watch, no lips to meet
Its messages with prayer—no matin-bell
Touches the delicate air with summons sweet;—
That smoke was of the avalanche;¹ that knell
Came from a tower of ice that into fragments fell.

Ah! why should that be comfortless—why cold,
Which is so near to Heaven? The lowly earth,
Out of the blackness of its charnel mould,
Feeds its fresh life, and lights its banks with gold;
But these proud summits, in eternal dearth,
Whose solitudes nor mourning know, nor mirth,
Rise passionless and pure, but all unblest:
Corruption—must it root the brightest birth?
And is the life that bears its fruitage best
One neither of supremacy nor rest?

¹ The vapour or dust of dry snow which rises after the fall of a large avalanche, sometimes looks in the distance not unlike the smoke of a village.

THE CRYSTAL ORDERS

I

LECTURER. Katie, you broke your coral necklace this morning?

KATHLEEN. Oh! who told you? It was in jumping. I'm so sorry!

L. I'm very glad. Can you fetch me the beads of it?

KATHLEEN. I've lost some; here are the rest in my pocket, if I can only get them out.

L. You mean to get them out some day, I suppose; so try now. I want them.

(KATHLEEN empties her pocket on the floor. The beads disperse. The School disperses also. Second Interlude—*hunting piece.*)

L. (after waiting patiently for a quarter of an hour, to ISABEL, who comes up from under the table with her hair all about her ears, and the last findable beads in her hand). Mice are useful little things sometimes. Now, mousie, I want all those beads crystallised. How many ways are there of putting them in order?

ISABEL. Well, first one would string them, I suppose?

L. Yes, that's the first way. You cannot string ultimate atoms; but you can put them in a row, and then they fasten themselves together, somehow, into a long rod or needle. We will call these "*Needle-crystals.*" What would be the next way?

ISABEL. I suppose, as we are to get together in the playground, when it stops raining, in different shapes?

L. Yes; put the beads together, then, in the simplest form you can, to begin with. Put them into a square, and pack them close.

ISABEL (after careful endeavour). I can't get them closer.

L. That will do. Now you may see, beforehand, that if you try to throw yourselves into square in this confused way, you will never know your places; so you had better consider every square as made of rods, put side by side. Take four beads of equal size, first, Isabel; put them into

a little square. That, you may consider as made up of two rods of two beads each. Then you can make a square a size larger, out of three rods of three. Then the next square may be a size larger. How many rods, Lily?

LILY. Four rods of four beads each, I suppose.

L. Yes, and then five rods of five, and so on. But now, look here; make another square of four beads again. You see they leave a little opening in the centre.

ISABEL (*pushing two opposite ones closer together*). Now they don't.

L. No; but now it isn't a square; and by pushing the two together you have pushed the two others farther apart.

ISABEL. And yet, somehow, they all seem closer than they were!

L. Yes; for before, each of them only touched two of the others, but now each of the two in the middle touches the other three. Take away one of the outsiders, Isabel: now you have three in a triangle—the smallest triangle you can make out of the beads. Now put a rod of three beads on at one side. So, you have a triangle of six beads; but just the shape of the first one. Next a rod of four on the side of that; and you have a triangle of ten beads: then a rod of five on the side of that; and you have a triangle of fifteen. Thus you have a square with five beads on the side and a triangle with five beads on the side; equal sided, therefore, like the square. So, however few or many you may be, you may soon learn how to crystallise quickly into these two figures, which are the foundation of form in the commonest, and therefore actually the most important, as well as in the rarest, and therefore, by our esteem, the most important, minerals of the world. Look at this in my hand.

VIOLET. Why, it is leaf gold!

L. Yes; but beaten by no man's hammer; or rather, not beaten at all, but woven. Besides, feel the weight of it. There is gold enough there to gild the walls and ceiling, if it were beaten thin.

VIOLET. How beautiful! And it glitters like a leaf covered with frost.

L. You only think it so beautiful because you know it is gold. It is not prettier, in reality, than a bit of brass: for it is Transylvanian gold; and they say there is a foolish

gnome in the mines there who is always wanting to live in the moon, and so alloys all the gold with a little silver. I don't know how that may be: but the silver always *is* in the gold; and if he does it, it's very provoking of him, for no gold is woven so fine anywhere else.

MARY (*who has been looking through her magnifying glass*). But this is not woven. This is all made of little triangles.

L. Say "patched," then, if you must be so particular. But if you fancy all those triangles, small as they are (and many of them are infinitely small), made up again of rods, and those of grains, as we built our great triangle of the beads, what word will you take for the manufacture?

MAY. There's no word—it is beyond words.

L. Yes; and that would matter little, were it not beyond thoughts too. But, at all events, this yellow leaf of dead gold, shed, not from the ruined woodlands, but the ruined rocks, will help you to remember the second kind of crystals, *Leaf-crystals*, or *Foliated* crystals; though I show you the form in gold first only to make a strong impression on you, for gold is not generally, or characteristically, crystallised in leaves; the real type of foliated crystals is this thing, Mica; which if you once feel well, and break well, you will always know again; and you will often have occasion to know it, for you will find it everywhere, nearly, in hill countries.

KATHLEEN. If we break it well! May we break it?

L. To powder, if you like.

(*Surrenders plate of brown mica to public investigation.*
Third Interlude. It sustains severely philosophical treatment at all hands.)

FLORRIE (*to whom the last fragments have descended*). Always leaves, and leaves, and nothing but leaves, or white dust!

L. That dust itself is nothing but finer leaves.

(*Shows them to FLORRIE through magnifying glass.*)

II

L. You have then these two great orders, Needle-crystals, made (probably) of grains in rows; and Leaf-crystals, made (probably) of needles interwoven; now, lastly, there are crystals of a third order, in heaps, or knots, or masses

which may be made, either of leaves laid one upon another, or of needles bound like Roman fasces; and mica itself, when it is well crystallised, puts itself into such masses, as if to show us how others are made. Here is a brown six-sided crystal, quite as beautifully chiselled at the sides as any castle tower; but you see it is entirely built of folia of mica, one laid above another, which break away the moment I touch the edge with my knife. Now, here is another hexagonal tower, of just the same size and colour, which I want you to compare with the mica carefully; but as I cannot wait for you to do it just now, I must tell you quickly what main differences to look for. First, you will feel it is far heavier than the mica. Then, though its surface looks quite micaceous in the folia of it, when you try them with the knife, you will find you cannot break them away—

KATHLEEN. May I try?

L. Yes, you mistrusting Katie. Here's my strong knife for you. (*Experimental pause. KATHLEEN doing her best.*) You'll have that knife shutting on your finger presently, Kate; and I don't know a girl who would like less to have her hand tied up for a week.

KATHLEEN (*who also does not like to be beaten,—giving up the knife despondently*). What *can* the nasty hard thing be?

L. It is nothing but indurated clay, Kate: very hard set certainly, yet not so hard as it might be. If it were thoroughly well crystallised, you would see none of those micaceous fractures; and the stone would be quite red and clear, all through.

KATHLEEN. Oh, cannot you show us one?

L. Egypt can, if you ask her; she has a beautiful one in the clasp of her favourite bracelet.

KATHLEEN. Why, that's a ruby!

L. Well, so is that thing you've been scratching at.

KATHLEEN. My goodness!

(*Takes up the stone again, very delicately; and drops it. General consternation.*)

L. Never mind, Katie; you might drop it from the top of the house, and do it no harm. But though you really are a very good girl, and as good-natured as anybody can possibly be, remember, you have your faults, like other people; and, if I were you, the next time I wanted to assert

anything energetically, I would assert it by "my badness," not "my goodness."

KATHLEEN. Ah, now, it's too bad of you!

L. Well, then, I'll invoke, on occasion, my "too-badness." But you may as well pick up the ruby, now you have dropped it; and look carefully at the beautiful hexagonal lines which gleam on its surface: and here is a pretty white sapphire (essentially the same stone as the ruby), in which you will see the same lovely structure, like the threads of the finest white cobweb. I do not know what is the exact method of a ruby's construction; but you see by these lines what fine construction there *is*, even in this hardest of stones (after the diamond), which usually appears as a massive lump or knot. There is therefore no real mineralogical distinction between needle crystals and knotted crystals, but, practically crystallised masses throw themselves into one of the three groups we have been examining to-day; and appear either as Needles, as Folia, or as Knots; when they are in needles (or fibres), they make the stones or rocks formed out of them "*fibrous*;" when they are in folia, they make them "*foliated*;" when they are in knots (or grains), "*granular*." Fibrous rocks are comparatively rare, in mass; but fibrous minerals are innumerable; and it is often a question which really no one but a young lady could possibly settle, whether one should call the fibres composing them "threads" or "needles." Here is amianthus, for instance, which is quite as fine and soft as any cotton thread you ever sewed with; and here is sulphide of bismuth, with sharper points and brighter luster than your finest needles have; and fastened in white webs of quartz more delicate than your finest lace; and here is sulphide of antimony, which looks like mere purple wool, but it is all of purple needle crystals; and here is red oxide of copper (you must not breathe on it as you look, or you may blow some of the films of it off the stone), which is simply a woven tissue of scarlet silk. However, these finer thread forms are comparatively rare, while the bolder and needle-like crystals occur constantly; so that, I believe, "Needle-crystal" is the best word (the grand one is "Acicular crystal," but Sibyl will tell you it is all the same, only less easily understood; and therefore more scientific). Then the Leaf-crystals, as I said, form an immense mass of foliated rocks;



and the Granular crystals, which are of many kinds, form essentially granular, or granitic and porphyritic rocks: and it is always a point of more interest to me (and I think will ultimately be to you), to consider the causes which force a given mineral to take any one of these three general forms, than what the peculiar geometrical limitations are, belonging to its own crystals.

BEAUTY

“ Oh, lady Queen!—Oh, lady Queen!
Fairest of all who tread
The soft earth’s carpet green,
Or breathe the blessings shed
By the stars and tempest free;
Know thou, oh, lady Queen,
Earth hath borne, sun hath seen
Fairer than thee.

“ The flush of beauty burneth
In the palaces of earth,
But thy lifted spirit scorneth
All match of mortal birth:
And the nymph of the hill,
And the naiad of the sea,
Were of beauty quenched and chill,
Beside thee!”

CRYSTAL QUARRELS

LECTURER. Everything has its own wonders; but, given the nature of the plant, it is easier to understand what a flower will do, and why it does it, than, given anything we as yet know of stone-nature, to understand what a crystal will do, and why it does it. You at once admit a kind of volition and choice, in the flower; but we are not accustomed to attribute anything of the kind to the crystal. Yet there is, in reality, more likeness to some conditions of human feeling among stones than among plants. There is a far greater difference between kindly-tempered and ill-tempered crystals of the same mineral, than between any two specimens of the same flower: and the friendships and wars of crystals depend more definitely and curiously on their varieties of disposition, than any associations of flowers. Here, for instance, is a good garnet, living with good mica; one rich red, and the other silver white: the mica leaves exactly room enough for the garnet to crystallise comfortably in; and the garnet lives happily in its little white house; fitted to it, like a pholas in its cell. But here are wicked garnets living with wicked mica. See what ruin they make of each other! You cannot tell which is which; the garnets look like dull red stains on the crumbling stone. By the way, I never could understand, if St. Gothard is a real saint, why he can't keep his garnets in better order. These are all under his care; but I suppose there are too many of them for him to look after. The streets of Airolo are paved with them.

MAY. Paved with garnets?

L. With mica-slate and garnets; I broke this bit out of a paving stone. Now garnets and mica are natural friends, and generally fond of each other; but you see how they quarrel when they are ill brought up. So it is always. Good crystals are friendly with almost all other good crystals, however little they chance to see of each other, or however opposite their habits may be; while wicked crystals quarrel with one another, though they may be exactly alike in habits, and see each other continually. And of course the wicked crystals quarrel with the good ones.

ISABEL. Then do the good ones get angry?

L. No, never: they attend to their own work and life; and live it as well as they can, though they are always the sufferers. Here, for instance, is a rock-crystal of the purest race and finest temper, who was born, unhappily for him in a bad neighbourhood, near Beaufort in Savoy; and he has had to fight with vile calcareous mud all his life. See here, when he was but a child, it came down on him, and nearly buried him; a weaker crystal would have died in despair; but he only gathered himself together, like Hercules against the serpents, and threw a layer of crystal over the clay; conquered it,—imprisoned it,—and lived on. Then, when he was a little older, came more clay; and poured itself upon him here, at the side; and he has laid crystal over that, and lived on, in his purity. Then the clay came on at his angles, and tried to cover them, and round them away; but upon that he threw out buttress-crystals at his angles, all as true to his own central line as chapels round a cathedral apse; and clustered them round the clay; and conquered it again. At last the clay came on at his summit, and tried to blunt his summit; but he could not endure that for an instant; and left his flanks all rough, but pure; and fought the clay at his crest, and built crest over crest, and peak over peak, till the clay surrendered at last: and here is his summit, smooth and pure, terminating a pyramid of alternate clay and crystal, half a foot high!

LILY. Oh, how nice of him! What a dear, brave crystal! But I can't bear to see his flanks all broken, and the clay within them.

L. Yes; it was an evil chance for him, the being born to such contention; there are some enemies so base that even to hold them captive is a kind of dishonour. But look, here has been quite a different kind of struggle: the adverse power has been more orderly, and has fought the pure crystal in ranks as firm as its own. This is not mere rage and impediment of crowded evil: here is a disciplined hostility; army against army.

LILY. Oh, but this is much more beautiful!

L. Yes, for both the elements have true virtue in them; it is a pity they are at war, but they war grandly.

MARY. But is this the same clay as in the other crystal?

L. I used the word clay for shortness. In both, the enemy is really limestone; but in the first, disordered, and mixed with true clay; while, here, it is nearly pure, and crystallises into its own primitive form, the oblique six-sided one, which you know: and out of these it makes regiments; and then squares of the regiments, and so charges the rock crystal, literally in square against column.

ISABEL. Please, please, let me see. And what does the rock crystal do?

L. The rock crystal seems able to do nothing. The calcite cuts it through at every charge. Look here,—and here! The loveliest crystal in the whole group is hewn fairly into two pieces.

ISABEL. Oh, dear; but is the calcite harder than the crystal then?

L. No, softer. Very much softer.

MARY. But then, how can it possibly cut the crystal?

L. It did not really cut it, though it passes through it. The two were formed together, as I told you; but no one knows how. Still, it is strange that this hard quartz has in all cases a good-natured way with it, of yielding to everything else. All sorts of soft things make nests for themselves in it; and it never makes a nest for itself in anything. It has all the rough outside work; and every sort of cowardly and weak mineral can shelter itself within it. Look; these are hexagonal plates of mica; if they were outside of this crystal they would break, like burnt paper; but they are inside of it,—nothing can hurt them,—the crystal has taken them into its very heart, keeping all their delicate edges as sharp as if they were under water, instead of bathed in rock. Here is a piece of branched silver: you can bend it with a touch of your finger, but the stamp of its every fibre is on the rock in which it lay, as if the quartz had been as soft as wood.

LILY. Oh, the good, good quartz! But does it never get inside of anything?

L. As it is a little Irish girl who asks, I may perhaps answer, without being laughed at, that it gets inside of itself sometimes. But I don't remember seeing quartz make a nest for itself in anything else.

ISABEL. Please, there was something I heard you talking about, last term, with Miss Mary. I was at my lessons, but

I heard something about nests; and I thought it was birds' nests; and I couldn't help listening; and then, I remember, it was about "nests of quartz in granite." I remember, because I was so disappointed!

L. Yes, mousie, you remember quite rightly! but I can't tell you about those nests to-day, nor perhaps to-morrow: but there's no contradiction between my saying then, and now; I will show you that there is not, some day. Will you trust me meanwhile?

ISABEL. Won't I!

L. Well then, look, lastly, at his piece of courtesy in quartz; it is on a small scale, but wonderfully pretty. Here is nobly born quartz living with a green mineral, called epidote; and they are immense friends. Now, you see, a comparatively large and strong quartz-crystal, and a very weak and slender little one of epidote, have begun to grow, close by each other, and sloping unluckily towards each other, so that at last they meet. They cannot go on growing together; the quartz-crystal is five times as thick, and more than twenty times as strong,¹ as the epidote; but he stops at once, just in the very crowning moment of his life, when he is building his own summit! He lets the pale little film of epidote grow right past him; stopping his own summit for it; and he never himself grows any more.

LILY (*after some silence of wonder*). But is the quartz *never* wicked then?

L. Yes, but the wickedest quartz seems good-natured, compared to other things. Here are two very characteristic examples; one is good quartz, living with good pearlspar, and the other, wicked quartz, living with wicked pearlspar. In both, the quartz yields to the soft carbonate of iron: but, in the first piece, the iron takes only what it needs of room; and is inserted into the planes of the rock crystal with such precision that you must break it away before you can tell whether it really penetrates the quartz or not; while the crystals of iron are perfectly formed, and have a lovely bloom on their surface besides. But here, when the two minerals quarrel, the unhappy quartz has all its surface jagged and torn to pieces; and there is not a single iron crystal whose

¹ Quartz is not much harder than epidote; the strength is only supposed to be in some proportion to the squares of the diameters.

shape you can completely trace. But the quartz has the worst of it, in both instances.

VIOLET. Might we look at that piece of broken quartz again, with the weak little film across it? it seems such a strange lovely thing, like the self-sacrifice of a human being.

CRYSTAL VIRTUES

THERE seem to be in some crystals, from the beginning, an unconquerable purity of vital power, and strength of crystal spirit. Whatever dead substance, unacceptant of this energy, comes in their way, is either rejected, or forced to take some beautiful subordinate form; the purity of the crystal remains unsullied, and every atom of it bright with coherent energy. Then the second condition is, that from the beginning of its whole structure, a fine crystal seems to have determined that it will be of a certain size and of a certain shape; it persists in this plan, and completes it. Here is a perfect crystal of quartz for you. It is of an unusual form, and one which it might seem very difficult to build—a pyramid with convex sides, composed of other minor pyramids. But there is not a flaw in its contour throughout; not one of its myriads of component sides but is as bright as a jeweller's faceted work (and far finer, if you saw it close). The crystal points are as sharp as javelins; their edges will cut glass with a touch. Anything more resolute, consummate, determinate in form, cannot be conceived. Here, on the other hand, is a crystal of the same substance, in a perfectly simple type of form—a plain six-sided prism; but from its base to its point,—and it is nine inches long,—it has never for one instant made up its mind what thickness it will have. It seems to have begun by making itself as thick as it thought possible with the quantity of material at command. Still not being as thick as it would like to be, it has clumsily glued on more substance at one of its sides. Then it has thinned itself, in a panic of economy; then puffed itself out again; then starved one side to enlarge another; then warped itself quite out of its first line. Opaque, rough-surfaced, jagged on the edge, distorted in

the spine, it exhibits a quite human image of decrepitude and dishonour; but the worst of all the signs of its decay and helplessness is that half-way up, a parasite crystal, smaller, but just as sickly, has rooted itself in the side of the larger one, eating out a cavity round its root, and then growing backwards, or downwards, contrary to the direction of the main crystal. Yet I cannot trace the least difference in purity of substance between the first most noble stone, and this ignoble and dissolute one. The impurity of the last is in its will, or want of will.

THE LEGEND OF ST. BARBARA

LECTURER. If you want to see the gracefullest and happiest caprices of which dust is capable, you must go to the Hartz; not that I ever mean to go there myself, for I want to retain the romantic feeling about the name; and I have done myself some harm already by seeing the monotonous and heavy form of the Brocken from the suburbs of Brunswick. But whether the mountains be picturesque or not, the tricks which the goblins (as I am told) teach the crystals in them are incomparably pretty. They work chiefly on the mind of a docile, bluish-coloured, carbonate of lime; which comes out of a grey limestone. The goblins take the greatest possible care of its education, and see that nothing happens to it to hurt its temper: and when it may be supposed to have arrived at the crisis which is, to a well brought up mineral, what presentation at court is to a young lady—after which it is expected to set fashions—there's no end to its pretty ways of behaving. First it will make itself into pointed darts as fine as hoar-frost; here, it is changed into a white fur as fine as silk; here into little crowns and circlets, as bright as silver; as if for the gnome princesses to wear; here it is in beautiful little plates, for them to eat off; presently it is in towers, which they might be imprisoned in; presently in caves and cells, where they may make nun-gnomes of themselves, and no gnome ever hear of them more; here is some of it in sheaves, like corn; here, some in drifts, like snow; here, some in rays, like stars:

and, though these are, all of them, necessarily, shapes that the mineral takes in other places, they are all taken here with such a grace that you recognise the high caste and breeding of the crystals wherever you meet them; and know at once they are Hartz-born.

Of course, such fine things as these are only done by crystals which are perfectly good, and good-humoured; and of course, also, there are ill-humoured crystals who torment each other, and annoy quieter crystals, yet without coming to anything like serious war. Here (for once) is some ill-disposed quartz, tormenting a peaceable octahedron of fluor, in mere caprice. I looked at it the other night so long, and so wonderingly, just before putting my candle out, that I fell into another strange dream. But you don't care about dreams.

DORA. No; we didn't, yesterday; but you know we are made up of caprice; so we do, to-day: and you must tell us directly.

L. Well, you see, Neith and her work were still much in my mind; and then, I had been looking over these Hartz things for you, and thinking of the sort of grotesque sympathy there seemed to be in them with the beautiful fringe and pinnacle work of Northern architecture. So, when I fell asleep, I thought I saw Neith and St. Barbara talking together.

DORA. But what had St. Barbara to do with it?

L. My dear, I am quite sure St. Barbara is the patroness of good architects: not St. Thomas, whatever the old builders thought. It might be very fine, according to the monks' notions, in St. Thomas, to give all his employer's money away to the poor: but breaches of contract are bad foundations; and I believe, it was not he, but St. Barbara, who overlooked the work in all the buildings you and I care about. However that may be, it was certainly she whom I saw in my dream with Neith. Neith was sitting weaving, and I thought she looked sad, and threw her shuttle slowly; and St. Barbara was standing at her side, in a stiff little gown, all ins and outs, and angles; but so bright with embroidery that it dazzled me whenever she moved; the train of it was just like a heap of broken jewels, it was so stiff, and full of corners, and so many-coloured, and bright. Her

hair fell over her shoulders in long, delicate waves, from under a little three pinnacled crown, like a tower. She was asking Neith about the laws of architecture in Egypt and Greece; and when Neith told her the measures of the pyramids, St. Barbara said she thought they would have been better three-cornered: and when Neith told her the measures of the Parthenon, St. Barbara said she thought it ought to have had two transepts. But she was pleased when Neith told her of the temple of the dew, and of the Caryan maidens bearing its frieze: and then she thought that perhaps Neith would like to hear what sort of temples she was building herself, in the French valleys, and on the crags of the Rhine. So she began gossiping, just as one of you might to an old lady: and certainly she talked in the sweetest way in the world to Neith; and explained to her all about crockets and pinnacles: and Neith sat, looking very grave; and always graver as St. Barbara went on; till at last, I'm sorry to say, St. Barbara lost her temper a little.

MAY (*very grave herself*). "St. Barbara?"

L. Yes, May. Why shouldn't she? It was very tiresome of Neith to sit looking like that.

MAY. But, then, St. Barbara was a saint!

L. What's that, May?

MAY. A saint! A saint is—I'm sure you know!

L. If I did, it would not make me sure that you knew too, May: but I don't.

VIOLET (*expressing the incredulity of the audience*). Oh, —sir?

L. That is to say, I know that people are called saints who are supposed to be better than others: but I don't know how much better they must be, in order to be saints; nor how nearly anybody may be a saint and yet not be quite one; nor whether everybody who is called a saint was one; nor whether everybody who isn't called a saint, isn't one.

(*General silence; the audience feeling themselves on the verge of the Infinities—and a little shocked—and much puzzled by so many questions at once.*)

L. Besides, did you never hear that verse about being "called to be saints"?

MAY (*repeats Rom. i. 7*).

L. Quite right, May. Well, then, who are called to be that? People in Rome only?

MAY. Everybody, I suppose, whom God loves.

L. What! little girls as well as other people?

MAY. All grown-up people, I mean.

L. Why not little girls? Are they wicked when they are little?

MAY. Oh, I hope not.

L. Why not little girls, then?

(*Pause.*)

LILY. Because, you know, we can't be worth anything if we're ever so good;—I mean, if we try to be ever so good; and we can't do difficult things—like saints.

L. I am afraid, my dear, that old people are not more able or willing for their difficulties than you children are for yours. All I can say is, that if ever I see any of you, when you are seven or eight and twenty, knitting your brows over any work you want to do or to understand, as I saw you, Lily, knitting your brows over your slate this morning, I should think you very noble women. But—to come back to my dream—St. Barbara *did* lose her temper a little; and I was not surprised. For you can't think how provoking Neith looked, sitting there just like a statue of sandstone; only going on weaving, like a machine; and never quickening the cast of her shuttle; while St. Barbara was telling her so eagerly all about the most beautiful things, and chattering away, as fast as bells ring on Christmas Eve, till she saw that Neith didn't care; and then St. Barbara got as red as a rose, and stopped, just in time;—or I think she would really have said something naughty.

ISABEL. Oh, please, but didn't Neith say anything then?

L. Yes. She said, quite quietly, "It may be very pretty, my love; but it is all nonsense."

ISABEL. Oh dear, oh dear; and then?

L. Well; then I was a little angry myself, and hoped St. Barbara would be quite angry; but she wasn't. She bit her lips first; and then gave a great sigh—such a wild, sweet sigh—and then she knelt down and hid her face on Neith's knees. Then Neith smiled a little, and was moved.

ISABEL. Oh, I am so glad!

L. And she touched St. Barbara's forehead with a flower of white lotus; and St. Barbara sobbed once or twice, and then said: "If you only could see how beautiful it is, and how much it makes people feel what is good and lovely; and if you could only hear the children singing in the Lady chapels!" And Neith smiled,—but still sadly,—and said, "How do you know what I have seen, or heard, my love? Do you think all those vaults and towers of yours have been built without me? There was not a pillar in your Giotto's Santa Maria del Fiore which I did not set true by my spearshaft, as it rose. But this pinnacle and flame work which has set your little heart on fire is all vanity; and you will see what it will come to, and that soon; and none will grieve for it more than I. And then every one will disbelieve your pretty symbols and types. Men must be spoken simply to, my dear, if you would guide them kindly, and long." But St. Barbara answered, that, "Indeed she thought every one liked her work," and that "the people of different towns were as eager about their cathedral towers as about their privileges or their markets;" and then she asked Neith to come and build something with her, wall against tower; and "see whether the people will be as much pleased with your building as with mine." But Neith answered, "I will not contend with you, my dear. I strive not with those who love me; and for those who hate me, it is not well to strive with me, as weaver Arachne knows. And remember, child, that nothing is ever done beautifully, which is done in rivalry; nor nobly, which is done in pride."

Then St. Barbara hung her head quite down, and said she was very sorry she had been so foolish; and kissed Neith; and stood thinking a minute: and then her eyes got bright again, and she said, she would go directly and build a chapel with five windows in it; four for the four cardinal virtues, and one for humility, in the middle, bigger than the rest. And Neith very nearly laughed quite out, I thought; certainly her beautiful lips lost all their sternness for an instant; then she said, "Well, love, build it, but do not put so many colours into your windows as you usually do; else no one will be able to see to read inside: and when it is built, let a poor village priest consecrate it, and not an

archbishop." St. Barbara started a little, I thought, and turned as if to say something; but changed her mind, and gathered up her train, and went out. And Neith bent herself again to her loom, in which she was weaving a web of strange dark colours, I thought; but perhaps it was only after the glittering of St. Barbara's embroidered train: and I tried to make out the figures in Neith's web, and confused myself among them, as one always does in dreams; and then the dream changed altogether, and I found myself, all at once, among a crowd of little Gothic and Egyptian spirits, who were quarrelling: at least the Gothic ones were trying to quarrel; for the Egyptian ones only sat with their hands on their knees, and their aprons sticking out very stiffly; and stared. And after a while I began to understand what the matter was. It seemed that some of the troublesome building imps, who meddle and make continually, even in the best Gothic work, had been listening to St. Barbara's talk with Neith; and had made up their minds that Neith had no workpeople who could build against them. They were but dull imps, as you may fancy, by their thinking that; and never had done much, except disturbing the great Gothic building angels at their work, and playing tricks to each other; indeed, of late they had been living years and years, like bats, up under the cornices of Strasbourg and Cologne cathedrals, with nothing to do but to make mouths at the people below. However, they thought they knew everything about tower building; and those who had heard what Neith said, told the rest; and they all flew down directly, chattering in German, like jack-daws, to show Neith's people what they could do. And they had found some of Neith's old work-people somewhere near Sais sitting in the sun, with their hands on their knees; and abused them heartily: and Neith's people did not mind, at first, but, after a while, they seemed to get tired of the noise; and one or two rose up slowly, and laid hold of their measuring rods, and said, "If St. Barbara's people liked to build with them, tower against pyramid, they would show them how to lay stones." Then the Gothic little spirits threw a great many double somersaults for joy; and put the tips of their tongues out slyly to each other, on one side; and I heard the Egyptians say, "they must be some new

kind of frog—they didn't think there was much building in *them*." However, the stiff old workers took their rods, as I said, and measured out a square space of sand; but as soon as the German spirits saw that, they declared they wanted exactly that bit of ground to build on, themselves. Then the Egyptian builders offered to go farther off, and the German ones said, "Ja wohl." But as soon as the Egyptians had measured out another square, the little Germans said they must have some of that too. Then Neith's people laughed; and said, "they might take as much as they liked, but they would not move the plan of their pyramid again." Then the little Germans took three pieces, and began to build three spires directly; one large, and two little. And when the Egyptians saw they had fairly begun they laid their foundation all round, of large square stones: and began to build, so steadily that they had like to have swallowed up the three little German spires. So when the Gothic spirits saw that, they built their spires leaning, like the tower of Pisa, that they might stick out at the side of the pyramid. And Neith's people stared at them; and thought it very clever, but very wrong; and on they went, in their own way, and said nothing. Then the little Gothic spirits were terribly provoked because they could not spoil the shape of the pyramid; and they sat down all along the ledges of it to make faces; but that did no good. Then they ran to the corners, and put their elbows on their knees, and stuck themselves out as far as they could, and made more faces; but that did no good, neither. Then they looked up to the sky, and opened their mouths wide, and gobbled, and said it was too hot for work, and wondered when it would rain; but that did no good, neither. And all the while the Egyptian spirits were laying step above step, patiently. But when the Gothic ones looked, and saw how high they had got, they said, "Ach, Himmel!" and flew down in a great black cluster to the bottom; and swept out a level spot in the sand with their wings, in no time, and began building a tower straight up, as fast as they could. And the Egyptians stood still again to stare at them; for the Gothic spirits had got quite into a passion, and were really working very wonderfully. They cut the sandstone into strips as fine as reeds; and put one reed on the top of

another, so that you could not see where they fitted: and they twisted them in and out like basket work, and knotted them into likenesses of ugly faces, and of strange beasts biting each other: and up they went, and up still, and they made spiral staircases at the corners, for the loaded workers to come up by (for I saw they were but weak imps, and could not fly with stones on their backs), and then they made traceried galleries for them to run round by; and so up again; with finer and finer work, till the Egyptians wondered whether they meant the thing for a tower or a pillar: and I heard them saying to one another, "It was nearly as pretty as lotus stalks; and if it were not for the ugly faces, there would be a fine temple, if they were going to build it all with pillars as big as that!" But in a minute afterwards,—just as the Gothic spirits had carried their work as high as the upper course, but three or four, of the pyramid,—the Egyptians called out to them to "mind what they were about, for the sand was running away from under one of their tower corners." But it was too late to mind what they were about; for in another instant, the whole tower sloped aside; and the Gothic imps rose out of it like a flight of puffins, in a single cloud; but screaming worse than any puffins you ever heard: and down came the tower, all in a piece, like a falling poplar, with its head right on the flank of the pyramid; against which it snapped short off. And of course that waked me!

MARY. What a shame of you to have such a dream, after all you have told us about Gothic architecture!

L. If you have understood anything I ever told you about it, you know that no architecture was ever corrupted more miserably; or abolished more justly by the accomplishment of its own follies. Besides, even in its days of power, it was subject to catastrophes of this kind. I have stood too often, mourning, by the grand fragment of the apse of Beauvais, not to have that fact well burnt into me. Still, you must have seen, surely, that these imps were of the Flamboyant school; or, at least, of the German schools correspondent with it in extravagance.

MARY. But, then, where is the crystal about which you dreamed all this?

L. Here; but I suppose little Pthah has touched it again,

for it is very small. But, you see, here is the pyramid, built of great square stones of flourspar, straight up; and here are the three little pinnacles of mischievous quartz, which have set themselves, at the same time, on the same foundation; only they lean like the tower of Pisa, and come out obliquely at the side: and here is one great spire of quartz which seems as if it had been meant to stand straight up, a little way off; and then had fallen down against the pyramid base, breaking its pinnacle away. In reality, it has crystallised horizontally, and terminated imperfectly: but, then, by what caprice does one crystal form horizontally, when all the rest stand upright? But this is nothing to the phantasies of fluor, and quartz, and some other such companions, when they get leave to do anything they like. I could show you fifty specimens, about every one of which you might fancy a new fairy tale. Not that, in truth, any crystals get leave to do quite what they like; and many of them are sadly tried, and have little time for caprices—poor things!

MARY. I thought they always looked as if they were either in play or in mischief! What trials have they?

L. Trials much like our own. Sickness, and starvation; fevers, and agues, and palsy; oppression; and old age, and the necessity of passing away in their time, like all else. If there's any pity in you, you must come to-morrow, and take some part in these crystal griefs.

DORA. I am sure we shall cry till our eyes are red.

ST. CECILIA'S SHRINE

I

THE bell from Saint Cecilia's shrine
 Had tolled the evening hour of prayer;
 With tremulation far and fine,
 It waked the purple air:
 The peasant heard its distant beat,
 And crossed his brow with reverence meet:
 The maiden heard it sinking sweet

Within her jasmine bower,
And treading down, with silver feet,
Each pale and passioned flower:
The weary pilgrim, lowly lying
By Saint Cecilia's fountain grey,
Smiled to hear that curfew dying
Down the darkening day:
And where the white waves move and glisten
Along the river's reedy shore.
The lonely boatman stood to listen,
Leaning on his lazy oar.

On Saint Cecilia's vocal spire
The sun had cast his latest fire,
And flecked the west with many a fold
Of purple clouds o'er bars of gold.
That vocal spire is all alone,
Albeit its many winding tone
Floats waste away—oh! far away,
Where bowers are bright and fields are gay;
That vocal spire is all alone,
Amidst a secret wilderness,
With deep, free forest overgrown;
And purple mountains, which the kiss
Of pale-lipped clouds doth fill with love
Of the bright heaven that burns above:
The woods around are wild and wide,
And interwove with breezy motion;
Their bend before the tempest-tide
Is like the surge of shoreless ocean;
Their summer voice is like the tread
Of trooping steeds to battle bred;
Their autumn voice is like the cry
Of a nation clothed with misery;
And the stillness of the winter's wood
Is as the hush of a multitude.

The banks beneath are flecked with light,
All through the clear and crystal night;
For as the blue heaven, rolling on,
Doth lift the stars up one by one,

Each, like a bright eye through its gates
 Of silken lashes dark and long,
 With lustre fills, and penetrates,
 Those branches close and strong;
 And nets of tangled radiance weaves
 Between the many-twinkling leaves
 And through each small and verdant chasm
 Lets fall a flake of fire,
 Till every leaf, with voiceless spasm,
 Wakes like a golden lyre.
 Swift, though still, the fiery thrill
 Creeps along from spray to spray,
 Light and music, mingled, fill
 Every pulse of passionate breath,
 Which, o'er the incense-sickened death
 Of the faint flowers, that live by day,
 Floats like a soul above the clay,
 Whose beauty hath not passed away.

II

On the brow of a lordly line
 Of chasm-divided crag, there stood
 The walls of Saint Cecilia's shrine.
 Above the undulating wood
 Broad, basalt bulwarks, stern and stiff,
 Ribbed, like black bones, the grisly cliff.
 On the torn summit stretched away
 The convent walls, tall, old, and grey;
 So strong their ancient size did seem,
 So stern their mountain-seat,
 Well might the passing pilgrim deem
 Such desperate dwelling-place more meet
 For soldier true, or baron bold,
 For army's guard, or bandit's hold,
 Than for the rest, deep, calm, and cold,
 Of those whose tale of troublous life is told.

The topmost tower rose narrow and tall,
 O'er the broad mass of crag and wall;
 Against the streak of western light

It raised its solitary height.
Just above, nor far aloof,
From the cross upon its roof,
Sat a silver star.
The low clouds drifting fast and far,
Gave, by their own mocking loss,
Motion to the star and cross.
Even the black tower was stirred below
To join the dim, mysterious march,
The march so strangely slow.

Near its top, an opening arch
Let through a passage of pale sky
Enclosed with stern captivity;
And in its hollow height there hung,
From a black bar, a brazen bell:
Its hugeness was traced clear and well
The slanting rays among.
Ever and anon it swung
Half-way round its whirling wheel;
Back again, with rocking reel,
Lazily its length was flung,
Till brazen lip and beating tongue
Met once, with unrepeatd peal—
Then paused;—until the winds could feel
The weight of the wide sound, that clung
To their inmost spirit, like the appeal
Of startling memories, strangely strung,
That point to pain, and yet conceal.
Again with single sway it rung,
And the black tower beneath could feel
The undulating tremor steal
Through its old stones, with long shiver,
The wild woods felt it creep and quiver
Through their thick leaves and hushed air,
As fear creeps through a murderer's hair.
And the grey reeds beside the river,
In the moonlight meek and mild,
Moved like spears when war is wild.

THE CASTLE OF AMBOISE

ON grey Amboise's rocks and keep
The early shades of evening sleep,
And veils of mist, white-folded, fall
Round his long range of iron wall;
O'er the last line of withering light
The quick bats cut with angled flight,
And the low breathing fawns that rest
The twilight forest through,
Each on his starry flank and stainless breast,
Can feel the coolness of the dew
Soothing his sleep with heavenly weight:
Who are those who tread so late
Beyond Amboise's castle gate,
And seek the garden shade?
The flowers are closed, the paths are dark,
Their marble guards look stern and stark,
The birds are still, the leaves are stayed,
On windless bough, and sunless glade.
Ah! who are these that walk so late,
Beyond Amboise's castle gate?

Steep down the river's margin sink
The gardens of Amboise,
And all their inmost thickets drink
The wide low water-voice,
By many a bank whose blossoms shrink
Amidst sweet herbage young and cold,
Through many an arch and avenue,
That noontide roofs with chequered blue,
And paves with fluctuating gold,
Pierced by a thousand paths that guide
Grey echo-haunted rocks beside;
And into caves of cool recess,
Which ever-falling fountains dress
With emerald veils, dashed deep in dew;
And through dim thickets that subdue

The crimson light of flowers afar,
 As sweet rain doth the sunset, decked
 Themselves with many a living star,
 Which music-wingèd bees detect
 By the white rays and ceaseless odour shed
 Over the scattered leaves that every day lays dead.

THE VOICE

THEY knelt within the marble screen,
 Black-robed and moveless, hardly seen,
 Save by their shades that sometimes shook
 Along the quiet floor.
 Like leaf-shades on a waveless brook
 When the wind walks by the shore.
 The altar lights that burned between,
 Were seven small fire-shafts, white and keen,
 Intense and motionless.
 They did not shake for breeze nor breath,
 They did not change, nor sink, nor shiver;
 They burned as burn the barbs of death
 At rest within their angel's quiver.
 From lip to lip, in chorus kept,
 The sad, sepulchral music swept,
 While *one* sweet voice unceasing led:
 Were there but mercy for the dead,
 Such prayer had power to soothe—to save—
 Ay! even beneath the binding grave;
 So pure the springs of faith that fill
 The spirit's fount, at last unsealed,
 A corpse's ear, an angel's will,
 That voice might wake, or wield.
 Keener it rose, and wilder yet;
 The lifeless flowers that wreath and fret
 Column and arch with garlands white,
 Drank the deep fall of its delight,
 Like purple rain¹ at evening shed

¹ I never saw such a thing but once, on the mountains of Sestri, in the Gulf of Genoa. The whole western half of the sky was one intense

On Sestri's cedar-darkened shore,
 When all her sunlit waves lie dead,
 And, far along the mountains fled,
 Her clouds forget the gloom they wore,
 Till winding vale and pasture low
 Pant underneath their gush and glow;
 So sank, so swept, on earth and air,
 That single voice of passioned prayer.
 The hollow tombs gave back the tone,
 The roof's grey shafts of stalwart stone
 Quivered like chords; the keen night-blast
 Grew tame beneath the sound. 'Tis past:
 That failing cry—how feebly flung!
 What charm is laid on her who sung?

LA MADONNA DELL' ACQUA

In the centre of the lagoon between Venice and the mouths of the Brenta, supported on a few mouldering piles, stands a small shrine dedicated to the Madonna dell' Acqua, which the gondolier never passes without a prayer.

AROUND her shrine no earthly blossoms blow,
 No footsteps fret the pathway to and fro;
 No sign nor record of departed prayer,
 Print of the stone, nor echo of the air;
 Worn by the lip, nor wearied by the knee—
 Only a deeper silence of the sea;
 For there, in passing, pause the breezes bleak,
 And the foam fades, and all the waves are weak.
 The pulse-like oars in softer fall succeed,
 The black prow falters through the wild seaweed—
 Where, twilight-borne, the minute thunders reach,
 Of deep-mouthed surf, that bays by Lido's beach,
 With intermittent motion traversed far,
 And shattered glancing of the western star,

amber colour, the air crystalline and cloudless, the other, half grey with drifting showers. At the instant of sunset, the whole mass of *rain* turned of a deep rose-colour, the consequent rainbow being not varied with the seven colours, but one broad belt of paler rose; the other tints being so delicate as to be overwhelmed by the crimson of the rain.

Till the faint storm-bird on the heaving flow
Drops in white circles, silently like snow.
Not here the ponderous gem nor pealing note,
Dim to adorn—insentient to adore—
But purple-dyed, the mists of evening float,
In ceaseless incense from the burning floor
Of ocean, and the gathered gold of heaven
Laces its sapphire vault, and, early given,
The white rays of the rushing firmament
Pierce the blue-quivering night through wreath or rent
Of cloud inscrutable and motionless—
Hectic and wan, and moon-companioned cloud!
Oh! lone Madonna—angel of the deep—
When the night falls, and deadly winds are loud,
Will not thy love be with us while we keep
Our watch upon the waters, and the gaze
Of thy soft eyes, that slumber not, nor sleep?
Deem not thou, stranger, that such trust is vain;
Faith walks not on these weary waves alone,
Though weakness dread or apathy disdain
The spot which God has hallowed for His own.
They sin who pass it lightly—ill divining
The glory of this place of bitter prayer;
And hoping against hope, and self-resigning,
And reach of faith, and wrestling with despair,
And resurrection of the last distress,
Into the sense of Heaven, when earth is bare,
And of God's voice, when man's is comfortless.

NATURE AND ART

HAVE no fear, reader, in judging between nature and art, so only that you love both. If you can love one only, then let it be Nature; you are safe with her: but do not then attempt to judge the art, to which you do not care to give thought, or time. But if you love both, you may judge between them fearlessly; you may estimate the last, by its making you remember the first, and giving you the same kind of joy. If, in the square of the city, you can find a

delight, finite, indeed, but pure and intense, like that which you have in a valley among the hills, then its art and architecture are right; but if, after fair trial, you can find no delight in them, nor any instruction like that of nature, I call on you fearlessly to condemn them.

We are forced, for the sake of accumulating our power and knowledge, to live in cities: but such advantage as we have in association with each other is in great part counterbalanced by our loss of fellowship with nature. We cannot all have our gardens now, nor our pleasant fields to meditate in at eventide. Then the function of our architecture is, as far as may be, to replace these; to tell us about nature; to possess us with memories of her quietness; to be solemn and full of tenderness, like her, and rich in portraitures of her; full of delicate imagery of the flowers we can no more gather, and of the living creatures now far away from us in their own solitude. If ever you felt or found this in a London Street,—if ever it furnished you with one serious thought, or one ray of true and gentle pleasure,—if there is in your heart a true delight in its grim railings and dark casements, and wasteful finery of shops, and feeble coxcombry of club-houses,—it is well: promote the building of more like them. But if they never taught you anything, and never made you happier as you passed beneath them, do not think they have any mysterious goodness nor occult sublimity. Have done with the wretched affectation, the futile barbarism, of pretending to enjoy: for, as surely as you know that the meadow grass, meshed with fairy rings, is better than the wood pavement, cut into hexagons; and as surely as you know the fresh winds and sunshine of the upland are better than the choke-damp of the vault, or the gas-light of the ball-room, you may know, as I told you that you should, that the good architecture, which has life, and truth, and joy in it, is better than the bad architecture, which has death, dishonesty, and vexation of heart in it, from the beginning to the end of time.

THE TWO PATHS

I

THE paths of life are rudely laid
Beneath the blaze of burning skies;
Level and cool, in cloistered shade,
The church's pavement lies.
Along the sunless forest-glade
Its gnarlèd roots are coiled like crime;
Where glows the grass with freshening blade,
Thine eyes may track the serpent's slime;
But there thy steps are unbetrayed—
The serpent waits a surer time.

II

The fires of earth are fiercely blent,
Its suns arise with scorching glow;
The church's light hath soft descent,
And hues like God's own bow.
The brows of men are darkly bent,
Their lips are wreathed with scorn and guile;
But pure, and pale, and innocent,
The looks that light the marble aisle—
From angel eyes, in love intent,
And lips of everlasting smile.

III

Lady, the fields of earth are wide,
And tempt an infant's foot to stray:
Oh! lead thy loved one's steps aside,
Where the white altar lights his way.
Around his path shall glance and glide
A thousand shadows false and wild;
Oh! lead him to that surer Guide
Than sire serene, or mother mild,
Whose Childhood quelled the age of pride—
Whose Godhead called the little child.

IV

So, when thy breast of love untold,
That warmed his sleep of infancy,
Shall only make the marble cold
Beneath his aged knee,
From its steep throne of heavenly gold
Thy soul shall stoop to see
His grief, that cannot be controlled,
Turning to God from thee—
Cleaving with prayer the cloudy fold
That veils the Sanctuary.

EDUCATION

EDUCATION is, indeed, of all differences not divinely appointed, an instant effacer and reconciler. Whatever is undivinely poor, it will make rich; whatever is undivinely maimed, and halt, and blind, it will make whole, and equal, and seeing. The blind and the lame are to it as to David at the siege of the Tower of the Kings, "hated of David's soul." But there are other divinely-appointed differences, eternal as the ranks of the everlasting hills, and as the strength of their ceaseless waters. And these, education does *not* do away with; but measures, manifests, and employs.

In the handful of shingle which you gather from the sea-beach, which the indiscriminate sea, with equality of fraternal foam, has only educated to be, every one, round, you will see little difference between the noble and mean stones. But the jeweller's trenchant education of them will tell you another story. Even the meanest will be better for it, but the noblest so much better that you can class the two together no more. The fair veins and colours are all clear now, and so stern is Nature's intent regarding this, that not only will the polish show which is best, but the best will take most polish. You shall not merely see they have more virtue than the others, but see that more of virtue more clearly; and the less virtue there is, the more dimly you shall see what there is of it.

And the law about education, which is sorrowfullest to

vulgar pride, is this—that all its gains are at compound interest; so that, as our work proceeds, every hour throws us farther behind the greater men with whom we began on equal terms. Two children go to school hand in hand, and spell for half an hour over the same page. Through all their lives, never shall they spell from the same page more. One is presently a page ahead,—two pages, ten pages,—and evermore, though each toils equally, the interval enlarges—at birth nothing, at death, infinite.

And by this you may recognise true education from false. False education is a delightful thing, and warms you, and makes you every day think more of yourself. And true education is a deadly cold thing, with a Gorgon's head on her shield, and makes you every day think worse of yourself.

Worse in two ways, also, more's the pity. It is perpetually increasing the personal sense of ignorance and the personal sense of fault. And this last is the truth which is at the bottom of the common evangelical notions about conversion, and which the Devil has got hold of, and hidden, until, instead of seeing and confessing personal ignorance and fault, as compared with the sense and virtue of others, people see nothing but corruption in human nature, and shelter their own sins under accusation of their race (the worst of all assertions of equality and fraternity). And so they avoid the blessed and strengthening pain of finding out wherein they are fools, as compared with other men, by calling everybody else a fool too; and avoid the pain of discerning their own faults, by vociferously claiming their share in the great capital of original sin.

THE RULE OF THE GREATEST

IN one sense, and that deep, there is no such thing as magnitude. The least thing is as the greatest, and one day as a thousand years, in the eyes of the Maker of great and small things. In another sense, and that close to us and necessary, there exist both magnitude and value. Though not a sparrow falls to the ground unnoted, there are yet creatures who are of more value than many; and the same

Spirit which weighs the dust of the earth in a balance, counts the isles as a little thing.

The just temper of human mind in this matter may, nevertheless, be told shortly. Greatness can only be rightly estimated when minuteness is justly revered. Greatness is the aggregation of minuteness; nor can its sublimity be felt truthfully by any mind unaccustomed to the affectionate watching of what is least.

But if this affection for the least be unaccompanied by the powers of comparison and reflection; if it be intemperate in its thirst, restless in curiosity, and incapable of the patient and self-commandant pause which is wise to arrange, and submissive to refuse, it will close the paths of noble art to the student as effectually, and hopelessly, as even the blindness of pride, or impatience of ambition.

I say the paths of noble art, not of useful art. All accurate investigation will have its reward; the morbid curiosity will at least slake the thirst of others, if not its own; and the diffused and petty affections will distribute, in serviceable measure, their minute delights and narrow discoveries. The opposite error, the desire of greatness as such, or rather of what appears great to indolence and vanity;—the instinct which I have described in the "Seven Lamps," noting it, among the Renaissance builders, to be an especial and unfailing sign of baseness of mind, is as fruitless as it is vile; no way profitable—every way harmful; the widest and most corrupting expression of vulgarity. The microscopic drawing of an insect may be precious; but nothing except disgrace and misguidance will ever be gathered from such work as that of Haydon or Barry.

The work I have mostly had to do, since this essay was begun, has been that of contention against such debased issues of swollen insolence and windy conceit; but I have noticed lately, that some lightly-budding philosophers have depreciated true greatness; confusing the relations of scale, as they bear upon human instinct and morality; reasoning as if a mountain were no nobler than a grain of sand, or as if many souls were not of mightier interest than one. To whom it must be shortly answered that the Lord of power and life knew which were his noblest works, when He bade His servant watch the play of the Leviathan, rather than

dissect the spawn of the minnow; and that when it comes to practical question whether a single soul is to be jeopardized for many, and this Leonidas, or Curtius, or Winkelried shall abolish—so far as abolishable—his own spirit, that he may save more numerous spirits, such question is to be solved by the simple human instinct respecting number and magnitude, not by reasonings on infinity:—

“Le navigateur, qui, la nuit, voit l’océan étinceler de lumière, danser en guirlandes de feu, s’égayé d’abord de ce spectacle. Il fait dix lieues; la guirlande s’allonge indéfiniment, elle s’agite, se tord, se noue, aux mouvements de la lame; c’est un serpent monstrueux qui va toujours s’allongeant, jusqu’à trente lieues, quarante lieues. Et tout cela n’est qu’une danse d’animalcules imperceptibles. En quel nombre? A cette question l’imagination s’effraye; elle sent là une nature de puissance immense, de richesse épouvantable. . . . Que sont ces petits des petits? Rien moins que les constructeurs du globe où nous sommes. De leurs corps, de leurs débris, ils ont préparé le sol qui est sous nos pas. . . . Et ce sont les plus petits qui ont fait les plus grandes choses. L’imperceptible rhizopode s’est bâti un monument bien autre que les pyramides, pas moins que l’Italie centrale, une notable partie de la chaîne des Apennins. Mais c’était trop peu encore; les masses énormes du Chili, les prodigieuses Cordillères, qui regardent le monde à leurs pieds, sont le monument funéraire où cet être insaisissable, et pour ainsi dire, invisible, a enseveli les débris de son espèce disparue.”—(Michelet: *L’Insecte*.)

In these passages, and those connected with them in the chapter from which they are taken, itself so vast in scope, and therefore so sublime, we may perhaps find the true relations of minuteness, multitude, and magnitude. We shall not feel that there is no such thing as littleness, or no such thing as magnitude. Nor shall we be disposed to confuse a Volvox with the Cordilleras; but we may learn that they both are bound together by links of eternal life and toil; we shall see the vastest thing noble, chiefly for what it includes; and the meanest for what it accomplishes. Thence we might gather—and the conclusion will be found in experience true—that the sense of largeness would be most grateful to minds capable of comprehending, balancing and comparing; but capable also of great patience and expectation; while the sense of minute wonderfulness would be attractive to minds acted upon by sharp, small, penetrative sympathies, and apt to be impatient, irregular, and partial. This fact is curiously shown in the relations between the temper of the great composers and the modern pathetic school. I was surprised at the first rise of that school, now

some years ago, by observing how they restrained themselves to subjects which in other hands would have been wholly uninteresting; and in their succeeding efforts, I saw with increasing wonder, that they were almost destitute of the power of feeling vastness, or enjoying the forms which expressed it. A mountain or great building only appeared to them as a piece of colour of a certain shape. The powers it represented, or included, were invisible to them. In general they avoided subjects expressing space or mass, and fastened on confined, broken, and sharp forms; liking furze, fern, reeds, straw, stubble, dead leaves, and such like, better than strong stones, broad-flowing leaves, or rounded hills: in all such greater things, when forced to paint them, they missed the main and mighty lines; and this no less in what they loved than in what they disliked; for though fond of foliage, their trees always had a tendency to congeal into little acicular thorn-hedges, and never tossed free. Which modes of choice proceed naturally from a petulant sympathy with local and immediately visible interests or sorrows, not regarding their large consequences, nor capable of understanding more massive view or more deeply deliberate mercifulness;—but peevish and horror-struck, and often incapable of self-control, though not of self-sacrifice. There are more people who can forget themselves than govern themselves.

This narrowly pungent and bitter virtue has, however, its beautiful uses, and is of special value in the present day, when surface-work, shallow generalisation, and cold arithmetical estimates of things, are among the chief dangers and causes of misery, which men have to deal with.

On the other hand, and in clear distinction from all such workers, it is to be remembered that the great composers, not less deep in feeling, are in the fixed habit of regarding as much the relations and positions, as the separate nature, of things; that they reap and thresh in the sheaf, never pluck ears to rub in the hand; fish with net, not line, and sweep their prey together within great cords of errorless curve;—that nothing ever bears to them a separate or isolated aspect, but leads or links a chain of aspects—that to them it is not merely the surface, nor the substance, of anything that is of import; but its circumference and continence: that they are pre-eminently patient and reserved;

observant, not curious;—comprehensive, not conjectural; calm exceedingly; unerring, constant, terrible in steadfastness of intent; unconquerable: incomprehensible: always suggesting, implying, including, more than can be told.

And this may be seen down to their treatment of the smallest things.

For there is nothing so small but we may, as we choose, see it in the whole, or in part, and in subdued connection with other things, or in individual and petty prominence. The greatest treatment is always that which gives conception the widest range, and most harmonious guidance;—it being permitted us to employ a certain quantity of time, and certain number of touches of pencil—he who with these embraces the largest sphere of thought, and suggests within that sphere the most perfect order of thought, has wrought the most wisely, and therefore most nobly.

I do not, however, purpose here to examine or illustrate the nature of great treatment—to do so effectually would need many examples from the figure composers; and it will be better (if I have time to work out the subject carefully) that I should do so in a form which may be easily accessible to young students. Here I will only state in conclusion what it is chiefly important for all students to be convinced of, that all the technical qualities by which greatness of treatment is known, such as reserve in colour, tranquillity and largeness of line, and refusal of unnecessary objects of interest, are, when they are real, the exponents of an habitually noble temper of mind, never the observances of a precept supposed to be useful. The refusal or reserve of a mighty painter cannot be imitated; it is only by reaching the same intellectual strength that you will be able to give an equal dignity to your self-denial. No one can tell you beforehand what to accept, or what to ignore; only remember always, in painting as in eloquence, the greater your strength, the quieter will be your manner, and the fewer your words; and in painting, as in all the arts and acts of life, the secret of high success will be found, not in a fretful, and various excellence, but in a quiet singleness of justly chosen aim.

FRESH AIR, GOOD LIVING, AND A PANTOMIME

A WHOLESOME taste for cleanliness and fresh air is one of the final attainments of humanity. There are now not many European gentlemen, even in the highest classes, who have a pure and right love of fresh air. They would put the filth of tobacco even into the first breeze of a May morning.

But there are better things even than these, which one may want. Grant, that one has good food, clothes, lodging, and breathing, is that all the pay one ought to have for one's work? Wholesome means of existence, and nothing more? Enough, perhaps, you think, if everybody could get these. It may be so; I will not, at this moment, dispute it; nevertheless, I will boldly say that you should sometimes want more than these; and for one of many things more, you should want occasionally to be amused!

You know, the upper classes, most of them, want to be amused all day long. They think

“ One moment *unamused* a misery
Not made for feeble men.”

Perhaps you have been in the habit of despising them for this; and thinking how much worthier and nobler it was to work all day, and care at night only for food and rest, than to do no useful thing all day, eat unearned food, and spend the evening, as the morning, in “change of follies and relays of joy.” No, my good friend, that is one of the fatallest deceptions. It is not a noble thing, in sum and issue of it, not to care to be amused. It is indeed a far higher *moral* state, but it is a much lower *creature* state, than that of the upper classes.

Yonder poor horse, calm slave in daily chains at the railroad siding, who drags the detached rear of the train to the front again, and slips aside so deftly as the buffers meet; and, within eighteen inches of death every ten minutes, fulfils his dexterous and changeless duty all day long, content for eternal reward with his night's rest, and his champéd mouthful of hay;—anything more earnestly moral and beautiful

one cannot image—I never see the creature without a kind of worship. And yonder musician, who used the greatest power which (in the art he knew) the Father of spirits ever yet breathed into the clay of this world;—who used it, I say, to follow and fit with perfect sound the words of the *Zauberflöte* and of *Don Giovanni*,—basest and most monstrous of conceivable human words and subjects of thought—for the future “amusement” of his race!—No such spectacle of unconscious (and in that unconsciousness all the more fearful) moral degradation of the highest faculty to the lowest purpose can be found in history. But Mozart is nevertheless a nobler creature than the horse at the siding; nor would it be the least nearer the purpose of his Maker that he, and all his frivolous audiences, should evade the degradation of the profitless piping, only by living, like horses, in daily physical labour for daily bread.

There are three things to which man is born¹—labour, and sorrow, and joy. Each of these three things has its baseness and its nobleness. There is base labour, and noble labour. There is base sorrow, and noble sorrow. There is base joy, and noble joy. But you must not think to avoid the corruption of these things by doing without the things themselves. Nor can any life be right that has not all three. Labour without joy is base. Labour without sorrow is base. Sorrow without labour is base. Joy without labour is base.

I dare say you think I am a long time in coming to the pantomime; I am not ready to come to it yet in due course, for we ought to go and see the Japanese jugglers first, in order to let me fully explain to you what I mean. But I can't write much more to-day; so I shall merely tell you what part of the play set me thinking of all this, and leave you to consider of it yourself, till I can send you another letter. The pantomime was, as I said, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*. The forty thieves were girls. The forty thieves had forty companions, who were girls. The forty thieves and their forty companions were in some way mixed up with about four hundred and forty fairies, who were girls. There was an Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, in which the Oxford and Cambridge men were girls. There was a transformation

¹ I ask the reader's thoughtful attention to this paragraph, on which much of what else I have to say depends.

scene, with a forest, in which the flowers were girls, and a chandelier, in which the lamps were girls, and a great rainbow, which was all of girls.

Mingled incongruously with these seraphic, and, as far as my boyish experience extends, novel, elements of pantomime, there were yet some of its old and fast-expiring elements. There were, in speciality, two thoroughly good pantomime actors—Mr. W. H. Payne and Mr. Frederick Payne. All that these two did, was done admirably. There were two subordinate actors, who played, subordinately well, the fore and hind legs of a donkey. And there was a little actress, of whom I have chiefly to speak, who played exquisitely the little part she had to play. The scene in which she appeared was the only one in the whole pantomime in which there was any dramatic effort, or, with a few rare exceptions, any dramatic possibility. It was the home scene, in which Ali Baba's wife, on washing day, is called upon by butcher, baker, and milkman, with unpaid bills; and in the extremity of her distress hears her husband's knock at the door and opens it for him to drive in his donkey, laden with gold. The children, who have been beaten instead of getting breakfast, presently share in the raptures of their father and mother; and the little lady I spoke of—eight or nine years old—dances a *pas-de-deux* with the donkey.

She did it beautifully and simply, as a child ought to dance. She was not an infant prodigy; there was no evidence, in the finish or strength of her motion, that she had been put to continual torture through half her eight or nine years. She did nothing more than any child, well taught, but painlessly, might easily do. She caricatured no older person,—attempted no curious or fantastic skill. She was dressed decently,—she moved decently,—she looked and behaved innocently,—and she danced her joyful dance with perfect grace, spirit, sweetness, and self-forgetfulness. And through all the vast theatre, full of English fathers and mothers and children, there was not one hand lifted to give her sign of praise but mine.

Presently after this, came on the forty thieves, who, as I told you, were girls; and, there being no thieving to be presently done, and time hanging heavy on their hands, arms, and legs, the forty thief-girls proceeded to light forty cigars.

Whereupon the British public gave them a round of applause. Whereupon I fell a-thinking; and saw little more of the piece, except as an ugly and disturbing dream.

MEN AND TOOLS.

Now, in the make and nature of every man, however rude or simple, whom we employ in manual labour, there are some powers for better things: some tardy imagination, torpid capacity of emotion, tottering steps of thought, there are, even at the worst; and in most cases it is all our own fault that they *are* tardy or torpid. But they cannot be strengthened, unless we are content to take them in their feebleness, and unless we prize and honour them in their imperfection above the best and most perfect manual skill. And this is what we have to do with all our labourers; to look for the *thoughtful* part of them, and get that out of them, whatever we lose for it, whatever faults and errors we are obliged to take with it. For the best that is in them cannot manifest itself, but in company with much error. Understand this clearly: You can teach a man to draw a straight line, and to cut one; to strike a curved line, and to carve it; and to copy and carve any number of given lines or forms, with admirable speed and perfect precision; and you find his work perfect of its kind: but if you ask him to think about any of those forms, to consider if he cannot find any better in his own head, he stops; his execution becomes hesitating; he thinks, and ten to one he thinks wrong; ten to one he makes a mistake in the first touch he gives to his work as a thinking being. But you have made a man of him for all that. He was only a machine before, an animated tool.

And observe, you are put to stern choice in this matter. You must either make a tool of the creature, or a man of him. You cannot make both. Men were not intended to work with the accuracy of tools, to be precise and perfect in all their actions. If you will have that precision out of them, and make their fingers measure degrees like cog-wheels, and their arms strike curves like compasses, you

must unhumanise them. All the energy of their spirits must be given to make cogs and compasses of themselves. All their attention and strength must go to the accomplishment of the mean act. The eye of the soul must be bent upon the finger-point, and the soul's force must fill all the invisible nerves that guide it, ten hours a day, that it may not err from its steely precision, and so soul and sight be worn away, and the whole human being be lost at last—a heap of sawdust, so far as its intellectual work in this world is concerned; saved only by its Heart, which cannot go into the form of cogs and compasses, but expands, after the ten hours are over, into fireside humanity. On the other hand, if you will make a man of the working creature, you cannot make a tool. Let him but begin to imagine, to think, to try to do anything worth doing; and the engine-turned precision is lost at once. Out come all his roughness, all his dullness, all his incapability; shame upon shame, failure upon failure, pause after pause: but out comes the whole majesty of him also; and we know the height of it only, when we see the clouds settling upon him. And, whether the clouds be bright or dark, there will be transfiguration behind and within them.

And now, reader, look round this English room of yours, about which you have been proud so often, because the work of it was so good and strong, and the ornaments of it so finished. Examine again all those accurate mouldings, and perfect polishings, and unerring adjustments of the seasoned wood and tempered steel. Many a time you have exulted over them, and thought how great England was, because her slightest work was done so thoroughly. Alas! if read rightly, these perfectnesses are signs of a slavery in our England a thousand times more bitter and more degrading than that of the scourged African, or helot Greek. Men may be beaten, chained, tormented, yoked like cattle, slaughtered like summer flies, and yet remain in one sense, and the best sense, free. But to smother their souls within them, to blight and hew into rotting pollards the suckling branches of their human intelligence, to make the flesh and skin which, after the worm's work on it, is to see God, into leathern thongs to yoke machinery with,—this it is to be slave-masters indeed; and there might be more freedom in

England, though her feudal lords' lightest words were worth men's lives, and though the blood of the vexed husbandman dropped in the furrows of her fields, than there is while the animation of her multitudes is sent like fuel to feed the factory smoke, and the strength of them is given daily to be wasted into the fineness of a web, or racked into the exactness of a line.

And, on the other hand, go forth again to gaze upon the old cathedral front, where you have smiled so often at the fantastic ignorance of the old sculptors: examine once more those ugly goblins, and formless monsters, and stern statues, anatomiless and rigid; but do not mock at them, for they are the signs of the life and liberty of every workman who struck the stone; a freedom of thought, and rank in scale of being, such as no laws, no charters, no charities can secure; but which it must be the first aim of all Europe at this day to regain for her children.

Let me not be thought to speak wildly or extravagantly. It is verily this degradation of the operative into a machine, which, more than any other evil of the times, is leading the mass of the nations everywhere into vain, incoherent, destructive struggling for a freedom of which they cannot explain the nature to themselves. Their universal outcry against wealth, and against nobility, is not forced from them either by the pressure of famine, or the sting of mortified pride. These do much, and have done much in all ages; but the foundations of society were never yet shaken as they are at this day. It is not that men are ill fed, but that they have no pleasure in the work by which they make their bread, and therefore look to wealth as the only means of pleasure. It is not that men are pained by the scorn of the upper classes, but they cannot endure their own; for they feel that the kind of labour to which they are condemned is verily a degrading one, and makes them less than men. Never had the upper classes so much sympathy with the lower, or charity for them, as they have at this day, and yet never were they so much hated by them: for, of old, the separation between the noble and the poor was merely a wall built by law; now it is a veritable difference in level of standing, a precipice between upper and lower grounds in the field of humanity, and there is pestilential air at the

bottom of it. I know not if a day is ever to come when the nature of right freedom will be understood, and when men will see that to obey another man, to labour for him, yield reverence to him or to his place, is not slavery. It is often the best kind of liberty,—liberty from care. The man who say to one, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Come, and he cometh, has, in most cases, more sense of restraint and difficulty than the man who obeys him. The movements of the one are hindered by the burden on his shoulder; of the other, by the bridle on his lips: there is no way by which the burden may be lightened; but we need not suffer from the bridle if we do not champ at it. To yield reverence to another, to hold ourselves and our lives at his disposal, is not slavery; often, it is the noblest state in which a man can live in this world. There is, indeed, a reverence which is servile, that is to say irrational or selfish: but there is also noble reverence, that is to say, reasonable and loving; and a man is never so noble as when he is reverent in this kind; nay, even if the feeling pass the bounds of mere reason, so that it be loving, a man is raised by it. Which had, in reality, most of the serf nature in him,—the Irish peasant who was lying in wait yesterday for his landlord, with his musket muzzle thrust through the ragged hedge; or that old mountain servant, who, 200 years ago, at Inverkeithing, gave up his own life and the lives of his seven sons for his chief?¹—as each fell, calling forth his brother to the death, “Another for Hector!” And therefore, in all ages and all countries, reverence has been paid and sacrifice made by men to each other, not only without complaint, but rejoicingly; and famine, and peril, and sword, and all evil, and all shame, have been borne willingly in the causes of masters and kings; for all these gifts of the heart ennobled the men who gave, not less than the men who received them, and nature prompted, and God rewarded the sacrifice. But to feel their souls withering within them, unthanked, to find their whole being sunk into an unrecognised abyss, to be counted off into a heap of mechanism, numbered with its wheels, and weighed with its hammer strokes;—this nature bade not,—this God blesses not,—this humanity for no long time is able to endure.

We have much studied and much perfected, of late, the

¹ *Vide* Preface to “Fair Maid of Perth.”

great civilised invention of the division of labour; only we give it a false name. It is not, truly speaking, the labour that is divided; but the men:—Divided into mere segments of men—broken into small fragments and crumbs of life; so that all the little piece of intelligence that is left in a man is not enough to make a pin, or a nail, but exhausts itself in making the point of a pin, or the head of a nail. Now it is a good and desirable thing, truly, to make many pins in a day; but if we could only see with what crystal sand their points were polished,—sand of human soul, much to be magnified before it can be discerned for what it is,—we should think there might be some loss in it also. And the great cry that rises from all our manufacturing cities, louder than their furnace blast, is all in very deed for this,—that we manufacture everything there except men; we blanch cotton, and strengthen steel, and refine sugar, and shape pottery; but to brighten, to strengthen, to refine, or to form a single living spirit, never enters into our estimate of advantages. And all the evil to which that cry is urging our myriads can be met only in one way: not by teaching nor preaching, for to teach them is but to show them their misery, and to preach to them, if we do nothing more than preach, is to mock at it. It can be met only by a right understanding, on the part of all classes, of what kinds of labour are good for men, raising them, and making them happy; by a determined sacrifice of such convenience, or beauty, or cheapness as is to be got only by the degradation of the workman; and by equally determined demand for the products and results of healthy and ennobling labour.

WORK AND WORKMEN

If you are to have the thought of a rough and untaught man, you must have it in a rough and untaught way; but from an educated man, who can without effort express his thoughts in an educated way, take the graceful expression, and be thankful. Only *get* the thought, and do not silence the peasant because he cannot speak good grammar, or until you have taught him his grammar. Grammar and refine-

ment are good things, both, only be sure of the better thing first. And thus in art, delicate finish is desirable from the greatest masters, and is always given by them. In some places Michael Angelo, Leonardo, Phidias, Perugino, Turner, all finished with the most exquisite care; and the finish they give always leads to the fuller accomplishment of their noble purposes. But lower men than these cannot finish, for it requires consummate knowledge to finish consummately, and then we must take their thoughts as they are able to give them. So the rule is simple: Always look for invention first, and after that, for such execution as will help the invention, and as the inventor is capable of without painful effort, and *no more*. Above all, demand no refinement of execution where there is no thought, for that is slaves' work, unredeemed. Rather choose rough work than smooth work, so only that the practical purpose be answered, and never imagine there is reason to be proud of anything that may be accomplished by patience and sand-paper.

I shall only give one example, which however will show the reader what I mean, from the manufacture already alluded to, that of glass. Our modern glass is exquisitely clear in its substance, true in its form, accurate in its cutting. We are proud of this. We ought to be ashamed of it. The old Venice glass was muddy, inaccurate in all its forms, and clumsily cut, if at all. And the old Venetian was justly proud of it. For there is this difference between the English and Venetian workman, that the former thinks only of accurately matching his patterns, and getting his curves perfectly true and his edges perfectly sharp, and becomes a mere machine for rounding curves and sharpening edges, while the old Venetian cared not a whit whether his edges were sharp or not, but he invented a new design for every glass that he made, and never moulded a handle or a lip without a new fancy in it. And therefore, though some Venetian glass is ugly and clumsy enough, when made by clumsy and uninventive workmen, other Venetian glass is so lovely in its forms that no price is too great for it; and we never see the same form in it twice. Now you cannot have the finish and the varied form too. If the workman is thinking about his edges, he cannot be thinking of his design; if of his design, he cannot think of his edges. Choose whether you will pay

for the lovely form or the perfect finish, and choose at the same moment whether you will make the worker a man or a grindstone.

Nay, but the reader interrupts me,—“If the workman can design beautifully, I would not have him kept at the furnace. Let him be taken away and made a gentleman, and have a studio, and design his glass there, and I will have it blown and cut for him by common workmen, and so I will have my design and my finish too.”

All ideas of this kind are founded upon two mistaken suppositions: the first, that one man's thoughts can be, or ought to be, executed by another man's hands; the second, that manual labour is a degradation, when it is governed by intellect.

On a large scale, and in work determinable by line and rule, it is indeed both possible and necessary that the thoughts of one man should be carried out by the labour of others; in this sense I have already defined the best architecture to be the expression of the mind of manhood by the hands of childhood. But on a smaller scale, and in a design which cannot be mathematically defined, one man's thoughts can never be expressed by another: and the difference between the spirit of touch of the man who is inventing and of the man who is obeying directions, is often all the difference between a great and a common work of art. How wide the separation is between original and second-hand execution, I shall endeavour to show elsewhere; it is not so much to our purpose here as to mark the other and more fatal error of despising manual labour when governed by intellect; for it is no less fatal an error to despise it when thus regulated by intellect, than to value it for its own sake. We are always in these days endeavouring to separate the two; we want one man to be always thinking, and another to be always working, and we call one a gentleman, and the other an operative; whereas the workman ought often to be thinking, and the thinker often to be working, and both should be gentlemen, in the best sense. As it is, we make both ungentle, the one envying, the other despising, his brother; and the mass of society is made up of morbid thinkers and miserable workers. Now it is only by labour that thought can be made healthy, and only by thought that

labour can be made happy, and the two cannot be separated with impunity. It would be well if all of us were good handicraftsmen in some kind, and the dishonour of manual labour done away with altogether; so that though there should still be a trenchant distinction of race between nobles and commoners, there should not, among the latter, be a trenchant distinction of employment, as between idle and working men, or between men of liberal and illiberal professions. All professions should be liberal, and there should be less pride felt in peculiarity of employment, and more in excellence of achievement. And yet more, in each several profession, no master should be too proud to do its hardest work. The painter should grind his own colours; the architect work in the mason's yard with his men; the master-manufacturer be himself a more skilful operative than any man in his mills; and the distinction between the man and another be only in experience and skill, and the authority and wealth which these must naturally and justly obtain.

I should be led far from the matter in hand, if I were to pursue this interesting subject. Enough, I trust, has been said to show the reader that the rudeness or imperfection which at first rendered the term "Gothic" one of reproach is indeed, when rightly understood, one of the most noble characters of Christian architecture, and not only a noble but an *essential* one. It seems a fantastic paradox, but it is nevertheless a most important truth, that no architecture can be truly noble which is *not* imperfect. And this is easily demonstrable. For since the architect, whom we will suppose capable of doing all in perfection, cannot execute the whole with his own hands, he must either make slaves of his workmen in the old Greek, and present English fashion, and level his work to a slave's capacities, which is to degrade it; or else he must take his workmen as he finds them, and let them show their weaknesses together with their strength, which will involve the Gothic imperfection, but render the whole work as noble as the intellect of the age can make it.

DECORATION

THEN, as regards decoration, I want you only to consult your own natural choice and liking. There is a right and wrong in it; but you will assuredly like the right if you suffer your natural instinct to lead you. Half the evil in this world comes from people not knowing what they do like, not deliberately setting themselves to find out what they really enjoy. All people enjoy giving away money, for instance: they don't know *that*,—they rather think they like keeping it; and they *do* keep it under this false impression, often to their great discomfort. Everybody likes to do good; but not one in a hundred finds *this* out. Multitudes think they like to do evil; yet no man ever really enjoyed doing evil since God made the world.

So in this lesser matter of ornament. It needs some little care to try experiments upon yourself; it needs deliberate question and upright answer. But there is no difficulty to be overcome, no abstruse reasoning to be gone into; only a little watchfulness needed, and thoughtfulness, and so much honesty as will enable you to confess to yourself, and to all men, that you enjoy things, though great authorities say you should not.

This looks somewhat like pride; but it is true humility, a trust that you have been so created as to enjoy what is fitting for you, and a willingness to be pleased, as it was intended you should be. It is the child's spirit, which we are then most happy when we most recover; only wiser than children in that we are ready to think it subject of thankfulness that we can still be pleased with a fair colour or a dancing light. And, above all, do not try to make all these pleasures reasonable, nor to connect the delight which you take in ornament with that which you take in construction or usefulness. They have no connection; and every effort that you make to reason from one to the other will blunt your sense of beauty, or confuse it with sensations altogether inferior to it. You were made for enjoyment, and the world was filled with things which you will enjoy, unless

you are too proud to be pleased by them, or too grasping to care for what you cannot turn to other account than mere delight. Remember that the most beautiful things in the world are the most useless; peacocks and lilies for instance; at least I suppose this quill I hold in my hand writes better than a peacock's would, and the peasants of Vevay, whose fields in spring time are as white with lilies as the Dent du Midi is with its snow, told me the hay was none the better for them.

ANIMAL PAINTERS AND PICTURES OF DOGS

CUYP is a man of large natural gift, and sees broadly, nay, even seriously; finds out—a wonderful thing for men to find out in those days—that there are reflections in water, and that boats require often to be painted upside down. A brewer by trade, he feels the quiet of a summer afternoon, and his work will make you marvellously drowsy. It is good for nothing else that I know of: strong; but unhelpful and unthoughtful. Nothing happens in his pictures, except some indifferent persons asking the way of somebody else, who, by their cast of countenance, seems not likely to know it. For farther entertainment perhaps a red cow and a white one; or puppies at play, not playfully; the man's heart not going even with the puppies. Essentially he sees nothing but the shine on the flaps of their ears.

Observe always, the fault lies not in the things being little, or the incident being slight. Titian could have put issues of life and death into the face of a man asking the way; nay, into the back of him, if he had so chosen. He has put a whole scheme of dogmatic theology into a row of bishops' backs at the Louvre. And for dogs, Velasquez has made some of them nearly as grand as his surly kings.

Into the causes of which grandeur we must look a little with respect not only to these puppies, and gray horses, and cattle of Cuyp, but to the hunting pieces of Rubens and Snyders. For closely connected with the Dutch rejection of motives of spiritual interest, is the increasing importance attached by them to animals, seen either in the chase or

in agriculture; and to judge justly of the value of this animal painting, it will be necessary for us to glance at that of earlier times.

And first of the animals which have had more influence over the human soul, in its modern life, than ever Apis or the crocodile had over Egyptian—the dog and horse. I stated, in speaking of Venetian religion, that the Venetians always introduced the dog as a contrast to the high aspects of humanity. They do this, not because they consider him the basest of animals, but the highest—the connecting link between men and animals; in whom the lower forms of really human feeling may be best exemplified, such as conceit, gluttony, indolence, petulance. But they saw the noble qualities of the dog, too;—all his patience, love, and faithfulness; therefore Veronese, hard as he is often on lap-dogs, has painted one great heroic poem on the dog.

Two mighty brindled mastiffs, and beyond them, darkness. You scarcely see them at first, against the gloomy green. No other sky for them—poor things. They are gray themselves, spotted with black all over; their multitudinous doggish vices may not be washed out of them,—are in grain of nature. Strong thewed and sinewed, however,—no blame on them as far as bodily strength may reach; their heads coal-black, with drooping ears and fierce eyes, bloodshot a little. Wildest of beasts perhaps they would have been, by nature. But between them stands the spirit of their human Love, dove-winged and beautiful, the resistless Greek boy, golden-quivered; his glowing breast and limbs the only light upon the sky,—purple and pure. He has cast his chain about the dogs' necks, and holds it in his strong right hand, leaning proudly a little back from them. They will never break loose.

This is Veronese's highest, or spiritual view of the dog's nature. He can only give this when looking at the creature alone. When he sees it in company with men, he subdues it, like an inferior light in presence of the sky; and generally then gives it a merely brutal nature, not insisting even on its affection. It is thus used in the *Marriage in Cana* to symbolise gluttony. That great picture I have not yet had time to examine in all its bearings of thought; but the chief purpose of it is, I believe, to express the pomp and pleasure

of the world, pursued without thought of the presence of Christ; therefore the Fool with the bells is put in the centre, immediately underneath the Christ; and in front are the couple of dogs in leash, one gnawing a bone. A cat lying on her back scratches at one of the vases which holds the wine of the miracle.

In the picture of Susannah, her little pet dog is merely doing his duty, barking at the Elders. But in that of the Magdalen (at Turin) a noble piece of bye-meaning is brought out by a dog's help. On one side is the principal figure, the Mary washing Christ's feet; on the other, a dog has just come out from beneath the table (the dog under the table eating of the crumbs), and in doing so, has touched the robe of one of the Pharisees, thus making it unclean. The Pharisee gathers up his robe in a passion, and shows the hem of it to a bystander, pointing to the dog at the same time.

In the Supper at Emmaus, the dog's affection is, however, fully dwelt upon. Veronese's own two little daughters are playing, on the hither side of the table, with a great wolf-hound, larger than either of them. One with her head down, nearly touching his nose, is talking to him,—asking him questions it seems, nearly pushing him over at the same time:—the other, raising her eyes, half archly, half dreamily, —some far-away thought coming over her,—leans against him on the other side, propping him with her little hand, laid slightly on his neck. He, all passive, and glad at heart, yielding himself to the pushing or sustaining hand, looks earnestly into the face of the child close to his; would answer her with the gravity of a senator, if so it might be:—can only look at her, and love her.

To Velasquez and Titian dogs seem less interesting than to Veronese; they paint them simply as noble brown beasts, but without any special character; perhaps Velasquez's dogs are sterner and more threatening than the Venetian's, as are also his kings and admirals. This fierceness in the animal increases, as the spiritual power of the artist declines; and, with the fierceness, another character. One great and infallible sign of the absence of spiritual power is the presence of the slightest taint of obscenity. Dante marked this strongly in all his representations of demons, and as we pass from the Venetians and Florentines to the Dutch, the

passing away of the soul-power is indicated by every animal becoming savage or foul. The dog is used by Teniers, and many other Hollanders, merely to obtain unclean jest; while by the more powerful men, Rubens, Snyders, Rembrandt, it is painted only in savage chase, or butchered agony. I know no pictures more shameful to humanity than the boar and lion hunts of Rubens and Snyders, signs of disgrace all the deeper, because the powers desecrated are so great. The painter of the village alehouse sign may, not dishonourably, paint the fox-hunt for the village squire; but the occupation of magnificent art-power in giving semblance of perpetuity to those bodily pangs which Nature has mercifully ordained to be transient, and in forcing us, by the fascination of its stormy skill, to dwell on that from which eyes of merciful men should instinctively turn away, and eyes of high-minded men scornfully, is dishonourable, alike in the power which it degrades, and the joy to which it betrays.

In our modern treatment of the dog, of which the prevailing tendency is marked by Landseer, the interest taken in him is disproportionate to that taken in man, and leads to a somewhat trivial mingling of sentiment, or warping by caricature; giving up the true nature of the animal for the sake of a pretty thought or pleasant jest. Neither Titian nor Velasquez ever jest; and though Veronese jests gracefully and tenderly, he never for an instant oversteps the absolute facts of nature. But the English painter looks for sentiment or jest primarily, and reaches both by a feebly romantic taint of fallacy, except in one or two simple and touching pictures, such as the Shepherd's Chief Mourner.

I was pleased by a little unpretending modern German picture at Dusseldorf, by E. Bosch, representing a boy carving a model of his sheep-dog in wood; the dog sitting on its haunches in front of him, watches the progress of the sculpture with a grave interest and curiosity, not in the least caricatured, but highly humorous. Another small picture, by the same artist, of a forester's boy being taught to shoot by his father,—the dog critically and eagerly watching the raising of the gun,—shows equally true sympathy.

IMAGINATION AND FANCY

THE fancy sees the outside, and is able to give a portrait of the outside, clear, brilliant, and full of detail.

The imagination sees the heart and inner nature, and makes them felt, but is often obscure, mysterious, and interrupted, in its giving of outer detail.

Take an instance. A writer with neither imagination nor fancy, describing a fair lip, does not see it, but thinks about it, and about what is said of it, and calls it well turned, or rosy, or delicate, or lovely, or afflicts us with some other quenching and chilling epithet. Now hear fancy speak,—

“ Her lips were red, and one was thin,
Compared with that was next her chin,
Some bee had stung it newly.”¹

The real, red, bright being of the lip is there in a moment. But it is all outside; no expression yet, no mind. Let us go a step farther with Warner, of Fair Rosamond struck by Eleanor:

“ With that she dashed her on the lips
So dyed double red;
Hard was the heart that gave the blow,
Soft were those lips that bled.”

The tenderness of mind begins to mingle with the outside colour, the Imagination is seen in its awakening. Next Shelley,—

“ Lamp of life, thy lips are burning
Through the veil that seems to hide them,
As the radiant lines of morning
Through thin clouds ere they divide them.”

¹ I take this and the next instance from Leigh Hunt's admirable piece of criticism, “Imagination and Fancy,” which ought to be read with care, and to which, though somewhat loosely arranged, I may refer for all the filling up and illustration that the subject requires. With respect to what has just been said respecting want of imagination, compare his criticism of Addison's Cato. I cannot, however, confirm his judgment, nor admit his selection of instances, among painters: he has looked to their manner only and habitual choice of subject, without feeling their power; and has given work to the coarseness, mindlessness, and eclecticism of Guido and the Caracci, which in its poetical demand of tenderness might have foiled Pinturicchio, of dignity, Leonardo, and of colour, Giorgione.

There dawns the entire soul in that morning; yet we may stop if we choose at the image still external, at the crimson clouds. The imagination is contemplative rather than penetrative. Last, hear Hamlet—

“Here hung those lips that I have kissed, I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar?”

There is the essence of lip, and the full power of the imagination.

Again, compare Milton's flowers in *Lycidas* with *Perdita's*. In Milton it happens, I think, generally, and in the case before us most certainly, that the imagination is mixed and broken with fancy, and so the strength of the imagery is part of iron and part of clay:

“Bring the rathe primrose, that forsaken dies	(Imagination)
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,	(Nugatory)
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,—	(Fancy)
The glowing violet,	(Imagination)
The musk rose, and the well-attired woodbine,	(Fancy, vulgar)
With cowslips wan, that hang the pensive head,	(Imagination)
And every flower that sad embroidery wears.”	(Mixed)

Then hear *Perdita*:

“O Proserpina,
 For the flowers now, that, frightened, thou let'st fall
 From Dis's waggon. Daffodils
 That come before the Swallow dares, and take
 The winds of March with beauty. Violets, dim,
 But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
 Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses
 That die unmarried, ere they can behold
 Bright Phœbus in his strength, a malady
 Most incident to maids.”

Observe how the imagination in these last lines goes into the very inmost soul of every flower, after having touched them all at first with that heavenly timidity, the shadow of *Proserpine's*; and gilded them with celestial gathering, and never stops on their spots, or their bodily shape, while Milton sticks in the stains upon them, and puts us off with that unhappy freak of jet in the very flower that without this bit of paper-staining would have been the most precious to us of all. “There is pansies, that's for thoughts.”

So I believe it will be found throughout the operation

of the fancy, that it has to do with the outsides of things, and is content therewith: of this there can be no doubt in such passages as that description of Mab, so often given as an illustration of it, and many other instances will be found in Leigh Hunt's work already referred to. Only some embarrassment is caused by passages in which Fancy is seizing the outward signs of emotion, understanding them as such, and yet, in pursuance of her proper function, taking for her share, and for that which she chooses to dwell upon, the outside sign rather than the emotion. Note in Macbeth that brilliant instance.

"Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold."

The outward shiver and coldness of fear is seized on, and irregularly but admirably attributed by the Fancy to the drift of the banners. Compare Solomon's song, where the imagination stays not at the outside, but dwells on the fearful emotion itself.

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning; fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"

THE OLD WATER-WHEEL

It lies beside the river, where its marge
Is black with many an old and oarless barge,
And yeasty filth, and leafage wild and rank
Stagnate and batten by the crumbling bank.

Once, slow revolving by the industrious mill,
It murmured, only on the Sabbath still;
And evening winds its pulse-like beating bore
Down the soft vale, and by the winding shore.

Sparkling around its orb'd motion flew,
With quick, fresh fall, the drops of dashing dew;
Through noontide heat that gentle rain was flung,
And verdant round the summer herbage sprung.

Now dancing light and sounding motion cease,
In these dark hours of cold, continual peace;
Through its black bars the unbroken moonlight flows,
And dry winds howl about its long repose;

And mouldering lichens creep, and mosses grey
Cling round its arms, in gradual decay,
Amidst the hum of men—which doth not suit
That shadowy circle, motionless and mute.

So, by the sleep of many a human heart,
The crowd of men may bear their busy part,
Where withered, or forgotten, or subdued,
Its noisy passions have left solitude:

Ah! little can they trace the hidden truth!
What waves have moved it in the vale of youth!
And little can its broken chords avow
How once they sounded. All is silent now.

ELEMENTS OF DRAWING

I

REFLECTED LIGHT

HOLD up your hand with the edge of it towards you, as you sit with your side to the window, so that the flat of your hand is turned to the window. You will see one side of your hand distinctly lighted, the other distinctly in shade. Here are light side and dark side, with no seen shadow; the shadow being detached, perhaps on the table, perhaps on the other side of the room; you need not look for it at present.

Take a sheet of note-paper, and holding it edgewise, as you hold your hand, wave it up and down past the side of your hand which is turned from the light, the paper being of course farther from the window. You will see, as it passes, a strong gleam of light strike on your hand, and light it considerably on its dark side. This light is *reflected* light. It is thrown back from the paper (on which it strikes first

in coming from the window) to the surface of your hand, just as a ball would be if somebody threw it through the window at the wall and you caught it at the rebound.

Next, instead of the note-paper, take a red book, or a piece of scarlet cloth. You will see that the gleam of light falling on your hand, as you wave the book, is now reddened. Take a blue book, and you will find the gleam is blue. Thus every object will cast some of its own colour back in the light that it reflects.

Now it is not only these books or papers that reflect light to your hand: every object in the room on that side of it reflects some, but more feebly, and the colours mixing all together form a neutral¹ light, which lets the colour of your hand itself be more distinctly seen than that of any object which reflects light to it; but if there were no reflected light, that side of your hand would look as black as coal.

Objects are seen therefore, in general, partly by direct light, and partly by light reflected from the objects around them, or from the atmosphere and clouds. The colour of their light sides depends much on that of the direct light, and that of the dark sides on the colours of the objects near them. It is therefore impossible to say beforehand what colour an object will have at any point of its surface, that colour depending partly on its own tint, and partly on infinite combinations of rays reflected from other things. The only certain fact about dark sides is, that their colour will be changeful, and that a picture which gives them merely darker shades of the colour of the light sides must assuredly be bad.

Now, lay your hand flat on the white paper you are drawing on. You will see one side of each finger lighted, one side dark, and the shadow of your hand on the paper. Here, therefore, are the three divisions of shade seen at once. And although the paper is white, and your hand of a rosy colour somewhat darker than white, yet you will see that the shadow all along, just under the finger which casts it, is darker than the flesh, and is of a very deep grey. The reason of this is, that much light is reflected from the paper to the dark side

¹ Nearly neutral in ordinary circumstances, but yet with quite different tones in its neutrality, according to the colours of the various reflected rays that compose it.

of your finger, but very little is reflected from other things to the paper itself in that chink under your finger.

In general, for this reason, a shadow, or, at any rate, the part of the shadow nearest the object, is darker than the dark side of the object. I say in general, because a thousand accidents may interfere to prevent its being so. Take a little bit of glass, as a wine-glass, or the ink-bottle, and play it about a little on the side of your hand farthest from the window; you will presently find you are throwing gleams of light all over the dark side of your hand, and in some positions of the glass the reflection from it will annihilate the shadow altogether, and you will see your hand dark on the white paper. Now a stupid painter would represent, for instance, a drinking-glass beside the hand of one of his figures, and because he had been taught by rule that "shadow was darker than the dark side" he would never think of the reflection from the glass, but paint a dark grey under the hand, just as if no glass were there. But a great painter would be sure to think of the true effect, and paint it; and then comes the stupid critic, and wonders why the hand is so light on its dark side.

II

LIGHT IN WATER

When you are drawing shallow or muddy water, you will see shadows on the bottom, or on the surface, continually modifying the reflections; and in a clear mountain stream, the most wonderful complications of effect resulting from the shadows and reflections of the stones in it, mingling with the aspect of the stones themselves seen through the water. Do not be frightened at the complexity; but, on the other hand, do not hope to render it hastily. Look at it well, making out everything that you see, and distinguishing each component part of the effect. There will be, first, the stones seen through the water, distorted always by refraction, so that if the general structure of the stone shows straight parallel lines above the water, you may be sure they will be bent where they enter it; then the reflection of the part of the stone above the water crosses and interferes with the part that is seen through it, so that you can hardly tell which

is which; and wherever the reflection is darkest, you will see through the water best, and *vice versâ*. Then the real shadow of the stone crosses both these images, and where that shadow falls, it makes the water more reflective, and where the sunshine falls, you will see more of the surface of the water, and of any dust or motes that may be floating on it: but whether you are to see, at the same spot, most of the bottom of the water, or of the reflection of the objects above, depends on the position of the eye. The more you look down into the water, the better you see objects through it; the more you look along it, the eye being low, the more you see the reflection of objects above it. Hence the colour of a given space of surface in a stream will entirely change while you stand still in the same spot, merely as you stoop or raise your head; and thus the colours with which water is painted are an indication of the position of the spectator, and connected inseparably with the perspective of the shores. The most beautiful of all results that I know in mountain streams is when the water is shallow, and the stones at the bottom are rich reddish-orange and black, and the water is seen at an angle which exactly divides the visible colours between those of the stones and that of the sky, and the sky is of clear, full blue. The resulting purple, obtained by the blending of the blue and the orange-red, broken by the play of innumerable gradations in the stones, is indescribably lovely.

All this seems complicated enough already; but if there be a strong colour in the clear water itself, as of green or blue in the Swiss lakes, all these phenomena are doubly involved; for the darker reflections now become of the colour of the water. The reflection of a black gondola, for instance, at Venice, is never black, but pure dark green. And, farther, the colour of the water itself is of three kinds: one, seen on the surface, is a kind of milky bloom; the next is seen where the waves let light through them, at their edges; and the third, shown as a change of colour on the objects seen through the water. Thus, the same wave that makes a white object look of a clear blue, when seen through it, will take a red or violet-coloured bloom on its surface, and will be made pure emerald green by transmitted sunshine through its edges. With all this, however, you are not much concerned at present, but I tell it you partly as a preparation for

what we have afterwards to say about colour, and partly that you may approach lakes and streams with reverence, and study them as carefully as other things, not hoping to express them by a few horizontal dashes of white, or a few tremulous blots. Not but that much may be done by tremulous blots, when you know precisely what you mean by them, as you will see by many of the Turner sketches, which are now framed at the National Gallery; but you must have painted water many and many a day—yes, and all day long—before you can hope to do anything like those.

III

ON CLOUDS

Passing then to skies, note that there is this great peculiarity about sky subject, as distinguished from earth subject;—that the clouds, not being much liable to man's interference, are always beautifully arranged. You cannot be sure of this in any other features of landscape. The rock on which the effect of a mountain scene especially depends is always precisely that which the roadmaker blasts or the landlord quarries; and the spot of green which Nature left with a special purpose by her dark forest sides, and finished with her most delicate grasses, is always that which the farmer ploughs or builds upon. But the clouds, though we can hide them with smoke, and mix them with poison, cannot be quarried nor built over, and they are always therefore gloriously arranged; so gloriously, that unless you have notable powers of memory you need not hope to approach the effect of any sky that interests you. For both its grace and its glow depend upon the united influence of every cloud within its compass: they all move and burn together in a marvellous harmony; not a cloud of them is out of its appointed place, or fails of its part in the choir: and if you are not able to recollect (which in the case of a complicated sky it is impossible you should) precisely the form and position of all the clouds at a given moment, you cannot draw the sky at all; for the clouds will not fit if you draw one part of them three or four minutes before another.

You must try therefore to help what memory you have, by sketching at the utmost possible speed the whole range

of the clouds; marking, by any shorthand or symbolic work you can hit upon, the peculiar character of each, as transparent, or fleecy, or linear, or undulatory; giving afterwards such completion to the parts as your recollection will enable you to do. This, however, only when the sky is interesting from its general aspect; at other times, do not try to draw all the sky, but a single cloud: sometimes a round cumulus will stay five or six minutes quite steady enough to let you mark out his principal masses; and one or two white or crimson lines which cross the sunrise will often stay without serious change for as long. And in order to be the readier in drawing them, practise occasionally drawing lumps of cotton, which will teach you better than any other stable thing the kind of softness there is in clouds. For you will find when you have made a few genuine studies of sky, and then look at any ancient or modern painting, that ordinary artists have always fallen into one of two faults: either, in rounding the clouds, they make them as solid and hard-edged as a heap of stones tied up in a sack, or they represent them not as rounded at all, but as vague wreaths of mist or flat lights in the sky; and think they have done enough in leaving a little white paper between dashes of blue, or in taking an irregular space out with the sponge.

Now clouds are not as solid as flour-sacks; but, on the other hand, they are neither spongy nor flat. They are definite and very beautiful forms of sculptured mist; sculptured is a perfectly accurate word; they are not more *drifted* into form than they are *carved* into form, the warm air around them cutting them into shape by absorbing the visible vapour beyond certain limits; hence their angular and fantastic outlines, as different from a swollen, spherical, or globular formation, on the one hand, as from that of flat films or shapeless mists on the other. And the worst of all is, that while these forms are difficult enough to draw on any terms, especially considering that they never stay quiet, they must be drawn also at greater disadvantage of light and shade than any others, the force of light in clouds being wholly unattainable by art; so that if we put shade enough to express their form as positively as it is expressed in reality, we must make them painfully too dark on the dark sides. Nevertheless, they are so beautiful, if you in the least succeed

with them, that you will hardly, I think, lose courage. Outline them often with the pen, as you can catch them here and there; one of the chief uses of doing this will be, not so much the memorandum so obtained as the lesson you will get respecting the softness of the cloud-outlines. You will always find yourself at a loss to see where the outline really is; and when drawn it will always look hard and false, and will assuredly be either too round or too square, however often you alter it, merely passing from the one fault to the other and back again, the real cloud striking an inexpressible mean between roundness and squareness in all its coils or battlements. I speak at present, of course, only of the cumulus cloud: the lighter wreaths and flakes of the upper sky cannot be outlined;—they can only be sketched, like locks of hair, by many lines of the pen. Firmly developed bars of cloud on the horizon are in general easy enough, and may be drawn with decision. When you have thus accustomed yourself a little to the placing and action of clouds, try to work out their light and shade, just as carefully as you do that of other things. . . .

IV

COLOUR NOTE-BOOKS

You *ought* to love colour, and to think nothing quite beautiful or perfect without it; and if you really do love it, for its own sake, and are not merely desirous to colour because you think painting a finer thing than drawing, there is some chance you may colour well. Nevertheless, you need not hope ever to produce anything more than pleasant helps to memory, or useful and suggestive sketches in colour, unless you mean to be wholly an artist. You may, in the time which other vocations leave at your disposal, produce finished, beautiful, and masterly drawings in light and shade. But to colour well requires your life. It cannot be done cheaper. The difficulty of doing right is increased—not twofold nor threefold, but a thousand fold, and more—by the addition of colour to your work. For the chances are more than a thousand to one against your being right both in form and colour with a given touch: it is difficult enough to be right in form, if you attend to that only; but when you have to

attend, at the same moment, to a much more subtle thing than the form, the difficulty is strangely increased,—and multiplied almost to infinity by this great fact, that, while form is absolute, so that you can say at the moment you draw any line that it is either right or wrong, colour is wholly *relative*. Every hue throughout your work is altered by every touch that you add in other places; so that what was warm a minute ago, becomes cold when you have put a hotter colour in another place, and what was in harmony when you left it, becomes discordant as you set other colours beside it; so that every touch must be laid, not with a view to its effect at the time, but with a view to its effect in futurity, the result upon it of all that is afterwards to be done being previously considered. You may easily understand that, this being so, nothing but the devotion of life, and great genius besides, can make a colourist.

But though you cannot produce finished coloured drawings of any value, you may give yourself much pleasure, and be of great use to other people, by occasionally sketching with a view to colour only; and preserving distinct statements of certain colour facts—as that the harvest-moon at rising was of such and such a red, and surrounded by clouds of such and such a rosy grey; that the mountains at evening were in truth so deep in purple; and the waves by the boat's side were indeed of that incredible green. This only, observe, if you have an eye for colour; but you may presume that you have this, if you enjoy colour.

And, though of course you should always give as much form to your subject as your attention to its colour will admit of, remember that the whole value of what you are about depends, in a coloured sketch, on the colour *merely*. If the colour is wrong, everything is wrong: just as, if you are singing, and sing false notes, it does not matter how true the words are. If you sing at all, you must sing sweetly; and if you colour at all, you must colour rightly. Give up *all* the form, rather than the slightest part of the colour: just as, if you felt yourself in danger of a false note, you would give up the word, and sing a meaningless sound, if you felt that so you could save the note. Never mind though your houses are all tumbling down,—though your clouds are mere blots, and your trees mere knobs, and your sun and

moon like crooked sixpences,—so only that trees, clouds, houses, and sun or moon, are of the right colours. Of course, the discipline you have gone through will enable you to hint something of form, even in the fastest sweep of the brush; but do not let the thought of form hamper you in the least, when you begin to make coloured memoranda. If you want the form of the subject, draw it in black and white. If you want its colour, take its colour, and be sure you *have* it, and not a spurious, treacherous, half-measured piece of mutual concession, with the colours all wrong, and the forms still anything but right. It is best to get into the habit of considering the coloured work merely as supplementary to your other studies; making your careful drawings of the subject first, and then a coloured memorandum separately, as shapeless as you like, but faithful in hue, and entirely minding its own business.

V

ON CLEAR COLOUR

If you once begin to slur, or change, or sketch, or try this way and that with your colour, it is all over with it and with you. You will continually see bad copyists trying to imitate the Venetians, by daubing their colours about, and retouching, and finishing, and softening: when every touch and every added hue only lead them farther into chaos. There is a dog between two children in a Veronese in the Louvre, which gives the copyists much employment. He has a dark ground behind him, which Veronese has painted first, and then when it was dry, or nearly so, struck the locks of the dog's white hair over it with some half dozen curling sweeps of his brush, right at once, and for ever. Had one line or hair of them gone wrong, it would have been wrong for ever; no retouching could have mended it. The poor copyists daub in first some background, and then some dog's hair; then retouch the background, then the hair; work for hours at it, expecting it always to come right to-morrow—"when it is finished." They *may* work for centuries at it, and they will never do it. If they can do it with Veronese's allowance of work, half a dozen sweeps of the hand over the dark background, well; if not, they may ask the dog himself whether

it will ever come right, and get true answer from him—on Launce's conditions: "If he say 'ay,' it will; if he say 'no,' it will; if he shake his tail and say nothing, it will."

VI

ON COLOUR TONES

I said, just now, that, for the sake of students, my tax should not be laid on black or on white pigments; but if you mean to be a colourist, you must lay a tax on them yourself when you begin to use true colour; that is to say, you must use them little, and make of them much. There is no better test of your colour tones being good, than your having made the white in your picture precious, and the black conspicuous.

I say, first, the white precious. I do not mean merely glittering or brilliant: it is easy to scratch white sea-gulls out of black clouds, and dot clumsy foliage with chalky dew; but, when white is well managed, it ought to be strangely delicious,—tender as well as bright,—like inlaid mother of pearl, or white roses washed in milk. The eye ought to seek it for rest, brilliant though it may be; and to feel it as a space of strange, heavenly paleness in the midst of the flushing of the colours. This effect you can only reach by general depth of middle tint, by absolutely refusing to allow any white to exist except where you need it, and by keeping the white itself subdued by grey, except at a few points of chief lustre.

Secondly, you must make the black conspicuous. However small a point of black may be, it ought to catch the eye, otherwise your work is too heavy in the shadow. All the ordinary shadows should be of some *colour*,—never black, nor approaching black, they should be evidently and always of a luminous nature, and the black should look strange among them; never occurring except in a black object, or in small points indicative of intense shade in the very centre of masses of shadow. Shadows of absolutely negative grey, however, may be beautifully used with white, or with gold; but still though the black thus, in subdued strength, becomes *spacious*, it should always be *conspicuous*; the spectator should notice this grey neutrality with some wonder, and

enjoy, all the more intensely on account of it, the gold colour and the white which it relieves. Of all the great colourists Velasquez is the greatest master of the black chords. His black is more precious than most other people's crimson.

It is not, however, only white and black which you must make valuable; you must give rare worth to every colour you use; but the white and black ought to separate themselves quaintly from the rest, while the other colours should be continually passing one into the other, being all evidently companions in the same gay world; while the white, black, and neutral grey should stand monkishly aloof in the midst of them. You may melt your crimson into purple, your purple into blue, and your blue into green, but you must not melt any of them into black. You should, however, try, as I said, to give *preciousness* to all your colours; and this especially by never using a grain more than will just do the work, and giving each hue the highest value by opposition. All fine colouring, like fine drawing, is *delicate*; and so delicate that if, at last, you *see* the colour you are putting on, you are putting on too much. You ought to feel a change wrought in the general tone by touches of colour which individually are too pale to be seen; and if there is one atom of any colour in the whole picture which is unnecessary to it, that atom hurts it.

Notice also that nearly all good compound colours are *odd* colours. You shall look at a hue in a good painter's work ten minutes before you know what to call it. You thought it was brown, presently you feel that it is red; next that there is, somehow, yellow in it; presently afterwards that there is blue in it. If you try to copy it you will always find your colour too warm or too cold—no colour in the box will seem to have any affinity with it; and yet it will be as pure as if it were laid at a single touch with a single colour.

As to the choice and harmony of colours in general, if you cannot choose and harmonise them by instinct, you will never do it at all. If you need examples of utterly harsh and horrible colour, you may find plenty given in treatises upon colouring, to illustrate the laws of harmony; and if you want to colour beautifully, colour as best pleases yourself at *quiet times*, not so as to catch the eye, nor to look as if it were clever or difficult to colour in that way, but so that

the colour may be pleasant to you when you are happy, or thoughtful. Look much at the morning and evening sky, and much at simple flowers,—dog-roses, wood hyacinths, violets, poppies, thistles, heather, and such like,—as Nature arranges them in the woods and fields. If ever any scientific person tells you that two colours are “discordant,” make a note of the two colours, and put them together whenever you can. I have actually heard people say that blue and green were discordant; the two colours which Nature seems to intend never to be separated, and never to be felt, either of them, in its full beauty without the other!—a peacock’s neck, or a blue sky through green leaves, or a blue wave with green lights through it, being precisely the loveliest things, next to clouds at sunrise, in this coloured world of ours. If you have a good eye for colours, you will soon find out how constantly Nature puts purple and green together, purple and scarlet, green and blue, yellow and neutral grey, and the like; and how she strikes these colour-concords for general tones, and then works into them with innumerable subordinate ones; and you will gradually come to like what she does, and find out new and beautiful chords of colour in her work every day. If you *enjoy* them, depend upon it you will paint them to a certain point right: or, at least, if you do not enjoy them, you are certain to paint them wrong. If colour does not give you *intense* pleasure, let it alone; depend upon it, you are only tormenting the eyes and senses of people who feel colour, whenever you touch it; and that is unkind and improper. You will find, also, your power of colouring depends much on your state of health and right balance of mind; when you are fatigued or ill you will not see colours well, and when you are ill-tempered you will not choose them well: thus, though not infallibly a test of character in individuals, colour power is a great sign of mental health in nations; when they are in a state of intellectual decline, their colouring always gets dull.¹ You must also take great care not to be misled by affected talk about colours from people who have not the gift of it: numbers are

¹ The worst general character that colour can possibly have is a prevalent tendency to a dirty yellowish green, like that of a decaying heap of vegetables; this colour is *accurately* indicative of decline or paralysis in missal-painting.

eager and voluble about it who probably never in all their lives received one genuine colour-sensation. The modern religionists of the school of Overbeck are just like people who eat slate-pencil and chalk, and assure everybody that they are nicer and purer than strawberries and plums.

VII

THE GROWTH OF TREES

If we bring together in one view the principles we have ascertained in trees, we shall find they may be summed under four great laws; and that all perfect vegetable form is appointed to express these four laws in noble balance of authority.

1. Support from one living root.
2. Radiation, or tendency of force from some one given point, either in the root, or in some stated connexion with it.
3. Liberty of each bough to seek its own livelihood and happiness according to its needs, by irregularities of action both in its play and its work, either stretching out to get its required nourishment from light and rain, by finding some sufficient breathing-place among the other branches, or knotting and gathering itself up to get strength for any load which its fruitful blossoms may lay upon it, and for any stress of its storm-tossed luxuriance of leaves; or playing hither and thither as the fitful sunshine may tempt its young shoots, in their undecided states of mind about their future life.

4. Imperative requirement of each bough to stop within certain limits, expressive of its kindly fellowship and fraternity with the boughs in its neighbourhood; and to work with them according to its power, magnitude, and state of health, to bring out the general perfectness of the great curve, and circumferent stateliness of the whole tree.

I think I may leave you, unhelped, to work out the moral analogies of these laws; you may, perhaps, however, be a little puzzled to see the meaning of the second one. It typically expresses that healthy human actions should spring radiantly (like rays) from some single heart motive; the most beautiful systems of action taking place when this motive

lies at the root of the whole life, and the action is clearly seen to proceed from it; while also many beautiful secondary systems of action taking place from motives not so deep or central, but in some beautiful subordinate connexion with the central or life motive.

The other laws, if you think over them, you will find equally significative; and as you draw trees more and more in their various states of health and hardship, you will be every day more struck by the beauty of the types they present of the truths most essential for mankind to know; and you will see what this vegetation of the earth, which is necessary to our life, first, as purifying the air for us and then as food, and just as necessary to our joy in all places of the earth,—what these trees and leaves, I say, are meant to teach us as we contemplate them, and read or hear their lovely language, written or spoken for us, not in frightful black letters, nor in dull sentences, but in fair green and shadowy shapes of waving words, and blossomed brightness of odoriferous wit, and sweet whispers of unintrusive wisdom, and playful morality.

VIII

THE TREE'S HISTORY

I have directed your attention early to foliage for two reasons. First, that it is always accessible as a study; and secondly, that its modes of growth present simple examples of the importance of leading or governing lines. It is by seizing these leading lines, when we cannot seize *all*, that likeness and expression are given to a portrait, and grace and a kind of *vital* truth to the rendering of every natural form. I call it *vital* truth, because these chief lines are always expressive of the past history and present action of the thing. They show in a mountain, first, how it was built or heaped up; and secondly, how it is now being worn away, and from what quarter the wildest storms strike it. In a tree, they show what kind of fortune it has had to endure from its childhood: how troublesome trees have come in its way, and pushed it aside, and tried to strangle or starve it; where and when kind trees have sheltered it, and grown up lovingly together with it, bending as it bent; what winds torment it

most; what boughs of it behave best, and bear most fruit; and so on. In a wave or cloud, these leading lines show the run of the tide and of the wind, and the sort of change which the water or vapour is at any moment enduring in its form, as it meets shore, or counter-wave, or melting sunshine. Now remember, nothing distinguishes great men from inferior men more than their always, whether in life or in art,

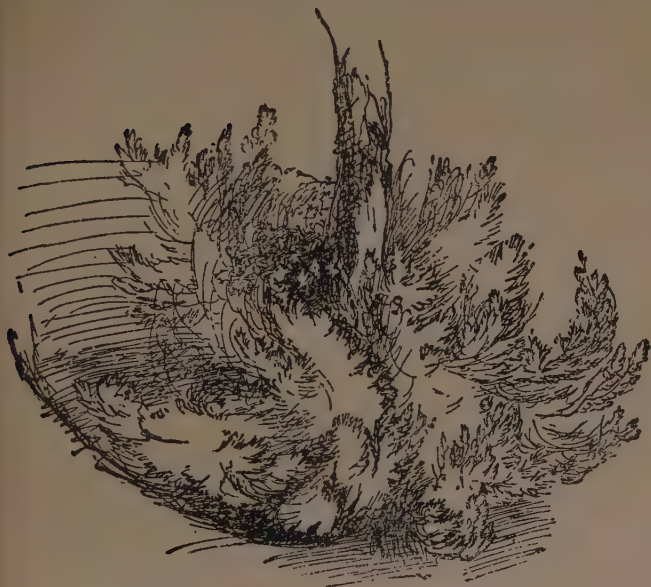


FIG. 1.

knowing the way things are going. Your dunce thinks they are standing still, and draws them all fixed; your wise man sees the change or changing in them, and draws them so,—the animal in its motion, the tree in its growth, the cloud in its course, the mountain in its wearing away. Try always, whenever you look at a form, to see the lines in it which have had power over its past fate and will have power over its futurity. Those are its *awful* lines; see that you seize on those, whatever else you miss. Thus, the leafage in Fig. 1

grew round the root of a stone pine, on the brow of a crag at Sestri near Genoa, and all the sprays of it are thrust away in their first budding by the great rude root, and spring out in every direction round it, as water splashes when a heavy stone is thrown into it. Then, when they have got clear of the root, they begin to bend up again; some of them, being little stone pines themselves, have a great notion of growing upright, if they can; and this struggle of theirs to recover their straight road towards the sky, after being obliged to grow sideways in their early years, is the effort that will mainly influence their future destiny, and determine if they are to be crabbed, forky pines, striking from that rock of Sestri, whose clefts nourish them, with bared red lightning



FIG. 2.

of angry arms towards the sea; or if they are to be goodly and solemn pines, with trunks like pillars of temples, and the purple burning of their branches sheathed in deep globes of cloudy green. Those, then, are their fateful lines; see that you give that spring and resilience, whatever you leave ungiven: depend upon it, their chief beauty is in these.

So in trees in general, and bushes, large or small, you will notice that, though the boughs spring irregularly and at various angles, there is a tendency in all to stoop less and less as they near the top of the tree. This structure, typified in the simplest possible terms at *c*, Fig. 2, is common to all trees that I know of, and it gives them a certain plummy character and aspect of unity in the hearts of their branches, which are essential to their beauty. The stem does not merely send off a wild branch here and there to take its own way, but all the branches share in one great fountain-like impulse; each has a curve and a path to take which fills a definite place, and each terminates all its minor branches at

its outer extremity, so as to form a great outer curve, whose character and proportion are peculiar for each species; that is to say, the general type of idea of a tree is not as *a*, Fig. 2, but as *b*, in which, observe, the boughs all carry their minor divisions right out to the bounding curve; not but that smaller branches, by thousands, terminate in the heart of the tree, but the idea and main purpose in every branch are to carry all its child branches well out to the air and light, and let each of them, however small, take its part in filling the united flow of the bounding curve. . . .

IX

RIVERS AND BRIDGES

All rivers, small or large, agree in one character, they like to lean a little on one side: they cannot bear to have their channels deepest in the middle, but will always, if they can, have one bank to sun themselves upon, and another to get cool under; one shingly shore to play over, where they may be shallow, and foolish, and child-like, and another steep shore, under which they can pause, and purify themselves, and get their strength of waves fully together for due occasion. Rivers in this way are just like wise men, who keep one side of their life for play, and another for work; and can be brilliant, and chattering, and transparent, when they are at ease, and yet take deep counsel on the other side when they set themselves to their main purpose. And rivers are just in this divided, also, like wicked and good men: the good rivers have serviceable deep places all along their banks, that ships can sail in; but the wicked rivers go scooping irregularly under their banks until they get full of strangling eddies, which no boat can row over without being twisted against the rocks; and pools like wells, which no one can get out of but the water-kelpie that lives at the bottom;—but, wicked or good, the rivers all agree in having two kinds of sides.

Now the natural way in which a village stone-mason therefore throws a bridge over a strong stream is, of course, to build a great door to let the cat through, and little doors to let the kittens through; a great arch for the great current,

to give it room in flood time, and little arches for the little currents along the shallow shore. This, even without any prudential respect for the floods of the great current, he would do in simple economy of work and stone; for the smaller your arches are, the less material you want on their flanks. Two arches over the same span of river, supposing the buttments are at the same depth, are cheaper than one, and that by a great deal; so that, where the current is shallow, the village mason makes his arches many and low: as the water gets deeper, and it becomes troublesome to build his piers up from the bottom, he throws his arches wider; at last he comes to the deep stream, and, as he cannot build at the bottom of that, he throws his largest arch over it with a leap, and with another little one or so gains the opposite shore. Of course as arches are wider they must be higher, or they will not stand; so the roadway must rise as the arches widen. And thus we have the general type of bridge, with its highest and widest arch towards one side, and a train of minor arches running over the flat shore on the other: usually a steep bank at the river-side next the large arch; always, of course, a flat shore on the side of the small ones: and the bend of the river assuredly concave towards this flat, cutting round, with a sweep into the steep bank; or, if there is no steep bank, still assuredly cutting into the shore at the steep end of the bridge.

Now this kind of bridge, sympathising, as it does, with the spirit of the river, and marking the nature of the thing it has to deal with and conquer, is the ideal of a bridge; and all endeavours to do the thing in a grand engineer's manner, with a level roadway and equal arches, are barbarous; not only because all monotonous forms are ugly in themselves, but because the mind perceives at once that there has been cost uselessly thrown away for the sake of formality.

X

ON TURNER'S "HEYSHAM"

The subject is a simple north-country village, on the shore of Morecambe Bay; not in the common sense a picturesque village: there are no pretty bow-windows, or red roofs, or

rocky steps of entrance to the rustic doors, or quaint gables; nothing but a single street of thatched and chiefly clay-built cottages, ranged in a somewhat monotonous line, the roofs so green with moss that at first we hardly discern the houses from the fields and trees. The village street is closed at the end by a wooden gate, indicating the little traffic there is on the road through it, and giving it something the look of a large farmstead, in which a right of way lies through the yard. The road which leads to this gate is full of ruts, and winds down a bad bit of hill between two broken banks of moor ground, succeeding immediately to the few enclosures which surround the village; they can hardly be called gardens: but a decayed fragment or two of fencing fill the gaps in the bank; and a clothes-line, with some clothes on it, striped blue and red, and a smock-frock, is stretched between the trunks of some stunted willows; a *very* small haystack and pigstye being seen at the back of the cottage beyond. An empty, two-wheeled, lumbering cart, drawn by a pair of horses with huge wooden collars, the driver sitting lazily in the sun, sideways on the leader, is going slowly home along the rough road, it being about country dinner-time. At the end of the village there is a better house, with three chimneys and a dormer window in its roof, and the roof is of stone shingle instead of thatch, but very rough. This house is no doubt the clergyman's: there is some smoke from one of its chimneys, none from any other in the village; this smoke is from the lowest chimney at the back, evidently that of the kitchen, and it is rather thick, the fire not having been long lighted. A few hundred yards from the clergyman's house, nearer the shore, is the church, discernible from the cottages only by its low two-arched belfry, a little neater than one would expect in such a village; perhaps lately built by the Puseyite incumbent: and beyond the church, close to the sea, are two fragments of a border war-tower, standing on their circular mound, worn on its brow deep into edges and furrows by the feet of the village children. On the bank of moor, which forms the foreground, are a few cows, the carter's dog barking at a vixenish one: the milk-maid is feeding another, a gentle white one, which turns its head to her, expectant of a handful of fresh hay, which she has brought for it in her blue apron, fastened up round her

waist; she stands with her pail on her head, evidently the village coquette, for she has a neat bodice, and pretty striped petticoat under the blue apron, and red stockings. Nearer us, the cowherd, barefooted, stands on a piece of the limestone rock (for the ground is thistly and not pleasurable to bare feet);—whether boy or girl we are not sure: it may be a boy, with a girl's worn-out bonnet on, or a girl with a pair of ragged trowsers on; probably the first, as the old bonnet is evidently useful to keep the sun out of our eyes when we are looking for strayed cows among the moorland hollows, and helps us at present to watch (holding the bonnet's edge down) the quarrel of the vixenish cow with the dog, which, leaning on our long stick, we allow to proceed without any interference. A little to the right the hay is being got in, of which the milkmaid has just taken her apronful to the white cow; but the hay is very thin, and cannot well be raked up because of the rocks; we must glean it like corn, hence the smallness of our stack behind the willows; and a woman is pressing a bundle of it hard together, kneeling against the rock's edge, to carry it safely to the hay-cart without dropping any. Beyond the village is a rocky hill, deep set with brushwood, a square crag or two of limestone emerging here and there, with pleasant turf on their brows, heaved in russet and mossy mounds against the sky, which, clear and calm, and as golden as the moss, stretches down behind it towards the sea. A single cottage just shows its roof over the edge of the hill, looking seawards: perhaps one of the village shepherds is a sea captain now, and may have built it there, that his mother may first see the sails of his ship whenever it runs into the bay. Then under the hill, and beyond the border tower, is the blue sea itself, the waves flowing in over the sand in long curved lines, slowly; shadows of cloud, and gleams of shallow water on white sand alternating—miles away; but no sail is visible, not one fisher-boat on the beach, not one dark speck on the quiet horizon. Beyond all are the Cumberland mountains, clear in the sun, with rosy light on all their crags.

I should think the reader cannot but feel the kind of harmony there is in this composition; the entire purpose of the painter to give us the impression of wild, yet gentle, country life, monotonous as the succession of the noiseless waves, patient and enduring as the rocks; but peaceful, and

full of health and quiet hope, and sanctified by the pure mountain air and baptismal dew of heaven, falling softly between days of toil and nights of innocence.

All noble composition of this kind can be reached only by instinct: you cannot set yourself to arrange such a subject; you may see it, and seize it, at all times, but never laboriously invent it. And your power of discerning what is best in expression, among natural subjects, depends wholly on the temper in which you keep your own mind; above all, on your living so much alone as to allow it to become acutely sensitive in its own stillness. The noisy life of modern days is wholly incompatible with any true perception of natural beauty. If you go down into Cumberland by the railroad, live in some frequented hotel, and explore the hills with merry companions, however much you may enjoy your tour or their conversation, depend upon it you will never choose so much as one pictorial subject rightly; you will not see into the depth of any. But take knapsack and stick, walk towards the hills by short day's journeys,—ten or twelve miles a day—taking a week from some starting-place sixty or seventy miles away: sleep at the pretty little wayside inns, or the rough village ones; then take the hills as they tempt you, following glen or shore as your eye glances or your heart guides, wholly scornful of local fame or fashion, and of everything which it is the ordinary traveller's duty to see, or pride to do. Never force yourself to admire anything when you are not in the humour; but never force yourself away from what you feel to be lovely, in search of anything better: and gradually the deeper scenes of the natural world will unfold themselves to you in still increasing fulness of passionate power; and your difficulty will be no more to seek or to compose subjects, but only to choose one from among the multitude of melodious thoughts with which you will be haunted, thoughts which will of course be noble or original in proportion to your own depth of character and general power of mind; for it is not so much by the consideration you give to any single drawing, as by the previous discipline of your powers of thought, that the character of your composition will be determined. Simplicity of life will make you sensitive to the refinement and modesty of scenery, just as inordinate excitement and pomp of daily life will make you enjoy coarse

colours and affected forms. Habits of patient comparison and accurate judgment will make your art precious, as they will make your actions wise; and every increase of noble enthusiasm in your living spirit will be measured by the reflection of its light upon the works of your hands.

VENICE

I

IN the olden days of travelling, now to return no more, in which distance could not be vanquished without toil, but in which that toil was rewarded, partly by the power of deliberate survey of the countries through which the journey lay, and partly by the happiness of the evening hours, when, from the top of the last hill he had surmounted, the traveller beheld the quiet village where he was to rest, scattered among the meadows beside its valley stream; or, from the long hoped for turn in the dusty perspective of the causeway, saw, for the first time, the towers of some famed city, faint in the rays of sunset—hours of peaceful and thoughtful pleasure, for which the rush of the arrival in the railway station is perhaps not always, or to all men, an equivalent,—in those days, I say, when there was something more to be anticipated and remembered in the first aspect of each successive halting-place, than a new arrangement of glass roofing and iron girder, there were few moments of which the recollection was more fondly cherished by the traveller than that which brought him within sight of Venice, as his gondola shot into the open lagoon from the canal of Mestre. Not but that the aspect of the city itself was generally the source of some slight disappointment, for, seen in this direction, its buildings are far less characteristic than those of the other great towns of Italy; but this inferiority was partly disguised by distance, and more than atoned for by the strange rising of its walls and towers out of the midst, as it seemed, of the deep sea, for it was impossible that the mind or the eye could at once comprehend the shallowness

of the vast sheet of water which stretched away in leagues of rippling lustre to the north and south, or trace the narrow line of islets bounding it to the east. The salt breeze, the white moaning sea-birds, the masses of black weed separating and disappearing gradually, in knots of heaving shoal, under the advance of the steady tide, all proclaimed it to be indeed the ocean on whose bosom the great city rested so calmly; not such blue, soft, lake-like ocean as bathes the Neapolitan promontories, or sleeps beneath the marble rocks of Genoa, but a sea with the bleak power of our own northern waves, yet subdued into a strange spacious rest, and changed from its angry pallor into a field of burnished gold, as the sun declined behind the belfry tower of the lonely island church, fitly named "St. George of the Seaweed." As the boat drew nearer to the city, the coast which the traveller had just left sank behind him into one long, low, sad-coloured line, tufted irregularly with brushwood and willows: but, at what seemed its northern extremity, the hills of Arqua rose in a dark cluster of purple pyramids, balanced on the bright mirage of the lagoon; two or three smooth surges of inferior hill extended themselves about their roots, and beyond these, beginning with the craggy peaks above Vicenza, the chain of the Alps girded the whole horizon to the north—a wall of jagged blue, here and there showing through its clefts a wilderness of misty precipices, fading far back into the recesses of Cadore, and itself rising and breaking away eastward, where the sun struck opposite upon its snow, into mighty fragments of peaked light, standing up behind the barred clouds of evening, one after another, countless, the crown of the Adrian Sea, until the eye turned back from pursuing them, to rest upon the nearer burning of the campaniles of Murano, and on the great city, where it magnified itself along the waves, as the quick silent pacing of the gondola drew nearer and nearer. And at last, when its walls were reached, and the outmost of its untrodden streets was entered, not through towered gate or guarded rampart, but as a deep inlet between two rocks of coral in the Indian sea; when first upon the traveller's sight opened the long ranges of columned palaces,—each with its black boat moored at the portal,—each with its image cast down, beneath its feet, upon that green pavement which every breeze broke into new

fantasies of rich tessellation; when first, at the extremity of the bright vista, the shadowy Rialto threw its colossal curve slowly forth from behind the palace of the Camerlenghi; that strange curve, so delicate, so adamantine, strong as a mountain cavern, graceful as a bow just bent; when first, before its moonlike circumference was all risen, the gondolier's cry, "Ah! Stali," struck sharp upon the ear, and the prow turned aside under the mighty cornices that half met over the narrow canal, where the splash of the water followed close and loud, ringing along the marble by the boat's side; and when at last that boat darted forth upon the breadth of silver sea, across which the front of the Ducal Palace, flushed with its sanguine veins, looks to the snowy dome of Our Lady of Salvation, it was no marvel that the mind should be so deeply entranced by the visionary charm of a scene so beautiful and so strange, as to forget the darker truths of its history and its being. Well might it seem that such a city had owed her existence rather to the rod of the enchanter than the fear of the fugitive; that the waters which encircled her had been chosen for the mirror of her state, rather than the shelter of her nakedness; and that all which in nature was wild or merciless,—Time and Decay, as well as the waves and tempests,—had been won to adorn her instead of to destroy, and might still spare, for ages to come, that beauty which seemed to have fixed for its throne the sands of the hour-glass as well as of the sea.

And although the last few eventful years, fraught with change to the face of the whole earth, have been more fatal in their influence on Venice than the five hundred that preceded them; though the noble landscape of approach to her can now be seen no more, or seen only by a glance, as the engine slackens its rushing on the iron line; and though many of her palaces are for ever defaced, and many in desecrated ruins, there is still so much of magic in her aspect, that the hurried traveller, who must leave her before the wonder of that first aspect has been worn away, may still be led to forget the humility of her origin, and to shut his eyes to the depth of her desolation. They, at least, are little to be envied, in whose hearts the great charities of the imagination lie dead, and for whom the fancy has no power to repress the importunity of painful impressions, or to raise

what is ignoble, and disguise what is discordant, in a scene so rich in its remembrances, so surpassing in its beauty. But for this work of the imagination there must be no permission during the task which is before us. The impotent feelings of romance, so singularly characteristic of this century, may indeed gild, but never save the remains of those mightier ages to which they are attached like climbing flowers; and they must be torn away from the magnificent fragments, if we would see them as they stood in their own strength. Those feelings, always as fruitless as they are fond, are in Venice not only incapable of protecting, but even of discerning, the objects to which they ought to have been attached. The Venice of modern fiction and drama is a thing of yesterday, a mere efflorescence of decay, a stage dream which the first ray of daylight must dissipate into dust. No prisoner, whose name is worth remembering, or whose sorrow deserved sympathy, ever crossed that "Bridge of Sighs," which is the centre of the Byronic ideal of Venice; no great merchant of Venice ever saw that Rialto under which the traveller now passes with breathless interest: the statue which Byron makes Faliero address as of one of his great ancestors was erected to a soldier of fortune a hundred and fifty years after Faliero's death; and the most conspicuous parts of the city have been so entirely altered in the course of the last three centuries, that if Henry Dandolo or Francis Foscari could be summoned from their tombs, and stood each on the deck of his galley at the entrance of the Grand Canal, that renowned entrance, the painter's favourite subject, the novelist's favourite scene, where the water first narrows by the steps of the Church of La Salute, —the mighty Doges would not know in what spot of the world they stood, would literally not recognise one stone of the great city, for whose sake, and by whose ingratitude, their grey hairs had been brought down with bitterness to the grave. The remains of *their* Venice lie hidden behind the cumbrous masses which were the delight of the nation in its dotage; hidden in many a grass-grown court, and silent pathway, and lightless canal, where the slow waves have sapped their foundations for five hundred years, and must soon prevail over them for ever. It must be our task to glean and gather them forth, and restore out of them

some faint image of the lost city, more gorgeous a thousand-fold than that which now exists, yet not created in the day-dream of the prince, nor by the ostentation of the noble, but built by iron hands and patient hearts, contending against the adversity of nature and the fury of man, so that its wonderfulness cannot be grasped by the indolence of imagination, but only after frank inquiry into the true nature of that wild and solitary scene, whose restless tides and trembling sands did indeed shelter the birth of the city but long denied her dominion.

When the eye falls casually on a map of Europe, there is no feature by which it is more likely to be arrested than the strange sweeping loop formed by the junction of the Alps and Apennines, and enclosing the great basin of Lombardy. This return of the mountain chain upon itself causes a vast difference in the character of the distribution of its debris on its opposite sides. The rock fragments and sediment which the torrents on the other side of the Alps bear into the plains are distributed over a vast extent of country, and, though here and there lodged in beds of enormous thickness, soon permit the firm substrata to appear from underneath them; but all the torrents which descend from the southern side of the High Alps, and from the northern slope of the Apennines, meet concentrically in the recess or mountain bay which the two ridges enclose; every fragment which thunder breaks out of their battlements, and every grain of dust which the summer rain washes from their pastures, is at last laid at rest in the blue sweep of the Lombardic plain; and that plain must have risen within its rocky barriers as a cup fills with wine, but for two contrary influences which continually depress, or disperse from its surface, the accumulation of the ruins of ages.

I will not tax the reader's faith in modern science by insisting on the singular depression of the surface of Lombardy, which appears for many centuries to have taken place steadily and continually; the main fact with which we have to do is the gradual transport, by the Po and its great collateral rivers, of vast masses of the finer sediment to the sea. The character of the Lombardic plains is most strikingly expressed by the ancient walls of its cities, composed for the most part of large rounded Alpine pebbles alternating

with narrow courses of brick; and was curiously illustrated in 1848, by the ramparts of these same pebbles thrown up four or five feet high round every field, to check the Austrian cavalry in the battle under the walls of Verona. The finer dust among which these pebbles are dispersed is taken up by the rivers, fed into continual strength by the Alpine snow, so that, however pure their waters may be when they issue from the lakes at the foot of the great chain, they become of the colour and opacity of clay before they reach the Adriatic; the sediment which they bear is at once thrown down as they enter the sea, forming a vast belt of low land along the eastern coast of Italy. The powerful stream of the Po of course builds forward the fastest; on each side of it, north and south, there is a tract of marsh, fed by more feeble streams, and less liable to rapid change than the delta of the central river. In one of these tracts is built RAVENNA, and in the other VENICE.

What circumstances directed the peculiar arrangement of this great belt of sediment in the earliest times, it is not here the place to inquire. It is enough for us to know that from the mouths of the Adige to those of the Piave there stretches, at a variable distance of from three to five miles from the actual shore, a bank of sand, divided into long islands by narrow channels of sea. The space between this bank and the true shore consists of the sedimentary deposits from these and other rivers, a great plain of calcareous mud, covered, in the neighbourhood of Venice, by the sea at high water, to the depth in most places of a foot or a foot and a half, and nearly everywhere exposed at low tide, but divided by an intricate network of narrow and winding channels, from which the sea never retires. In some places, according to the run of the currents, the land has risen into marshy islets, consolidated, some by art, and some by time, into ground firm enough to be built upon, or fruitful enough to be cultivated: in others, on the contrary, it has not reached the sea-level; so that, at the average low water, shallow lakelets glitter among its irregularly exposed fields of seaweed. In the midst of the largest of these, increased in importance by the confluence of several large river channels towards one of the openings in the sea bank, the city of Venice itself is built, on a crowded cluster of islands; the

various plots of higher ground which appear to the north and south of this central cluster, have at different periods been also thickly inhabited, and now bear, according to their size, the remains of cities, villages, or isolated convents and churches, scattered among spaces of open ground, partly waste and encumbered by ruins, partly under cultivation for the supply of the metropolis.

The average rise and fall of the tide is about three feet (varying considerably with the season); but this fall, on so flat a shore, is enough to cause continual movement in the waters, and in the main canals to produce a reflux which frequently runs like a mill stream. At high water no land is visible for many miles to the north or south of Venice, except in the form of small islands crowned with towers or gleaming with villages: there is a channel, some three miles wide, between the city and the mainland, and some mile and a half wide between it and the sandy breakwater called the Lido, which divides the lagoon from the Adriatic, but which is so low as hardly to disturb the impression of the city's having been built in the midst of the ocean, although the secret of its true position is partly, yet not painfully, betrayed by the clusters of piles set to mark the deep-water channels, which undulate far away in spotty chains like the studded backs of huge sea-snakes, and by the quick glittering of the crisped and crowded waves that flicker and dance before the strong winds upon the unlifted level of the shallow sea. But the scene is widely different at low tide. A fall of eighteen or twenty inches is enough to show ground over the greater part of the lagoon; and at the complete ebb the city is seen standing in the midst of a dark plain of sea-weed, of gloomy green, except only where the larger branches of the Brenta and its associated streams converge towards the port of the Lido. Through this salt and sombre plain the gondola and the fishing-boat advance by tortuous channels, seldom more than four or five feet deep, and often so choked with slime that the heavier keels furrow the bottom till their crossing tracks are seen through the clear sea water like the ruts upon a wintry road, and the oar leaves blue gashes upon the ground at every stroke, or is entangled among the thick weed that fringes the banks with the weight of its sullen waves, leaning to and fro upon the uncertain sway of the

exhausted tide. The scene is often profoundly oppressive, even at this day, when every plot of higher ground bears some fragment of fair building: but, in order to know what it was once, let the traveller follow in his boat at evening the windings of some unfrequented channel far into the midst of the melancholy plain; let him remove, in his imagination, the brightness of the great city that still extends itself in the distance, and the walls and towers from the islands that are near; and so wait, until the bright investiture and sweet warmth of the sunset are withdrawn from the waters, and the black desert of their shore lies in its nakedness beneath the night, pathless, comfortless, infirm, lost in dark languor and fearful silence, except where the salt runlets plash into the tideless pools, or the sea-birds flit from their margins with a questioning cry; and he will be enabled to enter in some sort into the horror of heart with which this solitude was anciently chosen by man for his habitation. They little thought, who first drove the stakes into the sand, and strewed the ocean reeds for their rest, that their children were to be the princes of that ocean, and their palaces its pride; and yet, in the great natural laws that rule that sorrowful wilderness, let it be remembered what strange preparation had been made for the things which no human imagination could have foretold, and how the whole existence and fortune of the Venetian nation were anticipated or compelled, by the setting of those bars and doors to the rivers and the sea. Had deeper currents divided their islands, hostile navies would again and again have reduced the rising city into servitude; had stronger surges beaten their shores, all the richness and refinement of the Venetian architecture must have been exchanged for the walls and bulwarks of an ordinary sea-port. Had there been no tide, as in other parts of the Mediterranean, the narrow canals of the city would have become noisome, and the marsh in which it was built pestiferous. Had the tide been only a foot or eighteen inches higher in its rise, the water-access to the doors of the palaces would have been impossible: even as it is, there is sometimes a little difficulty, at the ebb, in landing without setting foot upon the lower and slippery steps: and the highest tides sometimes enter the courtyards, and overflow the entrance halls. Eighteen inches more of difference between the level

of the flood and ebb would have rendered the doorsteps of every palace, at low water, a treacherous mass of weeds and limpets, and the entire system of water-carriage for the higher classes, in their easy and daily intercourse, must have been done away with. The streets of the city would have been widened, its network of canals filled up, and all the peculiar character of the place and the people destroyed.

The reader may perhaps have felt some pain in the contrast between this faithful view of the site of the Venetian Throne, and the romantic conception of it which we ordinarily form; but this pain, if he have felt it, ought to be more than counterbalanced by the value of the instance thus afforded to us at once of the inscrutableness and the wisdom of the ways of God. If, two thousand years ago, we had been permitted to watch the slow settling of the slime of those turbid rivers into the polluted sea, and the gaining upon its deep and fresh waters of the lifeless, impassable, unvoyageable plain, how little could we have understood the purpose with which those islands were shaped out of the void, and the torpid waters enclosed with their desolate walls of sand! How little could we have known, any more than of what now seems to us most distressful, dark, and objectless, the glorious aim which was then in the mind of Him in whose hand are all the corners of the earth! how little imagined that in the laws which were stretching forth the gloomy margins of those fruitless banks, and feeding the bitter grass among their shallows, there was indeed a preparation, and *the only preparation possible*, for the founding of a city which was to be set like a golden clasp on the girdle of the earth, to write her history on the white scrolls of the sea-surges, and to word it in their thunder, and to gather and give forth, in world-wide pulsation, the glory of the West and of the East, from the burning heart of her Fortitude and Splendour.

II

TORCELLO

SEVEN miles to the north of Venice, the banks of sand, which near the city rise little above low-water mark, attain by degrees a higher level, and knit themselves at last into fields

of salt morass, raised here and there into shapeless mounds, and intercepted by narrow creeks of sea. One of the feeblest of these inlets, after winding for some time among buried fragments of masonry, and knots of sunburnt weeds whitened with webs of fucus, stays itself in an utterly stagnant pool beside a plot of greener grass covered with ground ivy and violets. On this mound is built a rude brick campanile, of the commonest Lombardic type, which if we ascend towards evening (and there are none to hinder us, the door of its ruinous staircase swinging idly on its hinges), we may command from it one of the most notable scenes in this wide world of ours. Far as the eye can reach, a waste of wild sea moor, of a lurid ashen grey; not like our northern moors with their jet-black pools and purple heath, but lifeless, the colour of sackcloth, with the corrupted sea-water soaking through the roots of its acrid weeds, and gleaming hither and thither through its snaky channels. No gathering of fantastic mists, nor coursing of clouds across it; but melancholy clearness of space in the warm sunset, oppressive, reaching to the horizon of its level gloom. To the very horizon, on the north-east; but, to the north and west, there is a blue line of higher land along the border of it, and above this, but farther back, a misty band of mountains, touched with snow. To the east, the paleness and roar of the Adriatic, louder at momentary intervals as the surf breaks on the bars of sand; to the south, the widening branches of the calm lagoon, alternately purple and pale green, as they reflect the evening clouds or twilight sky; and almost beneath our feet, on the same field which sustains the tower we gaze from, a group of four buildings, two of them little larger than cottages (though built of stone, and one adorned by a quaint belfry), the third an octagonal chapel, of which we can see but little more than the flat red roof with its rayed tiling, the fourth, a considerable church with nave and aisles, but of which, in like manner, we can see little but the long central ridge and lateral slopes of roof, which the sunlight separates in one glowing mass from the green field beneath and grey moor beyond. There are no living creatures near the buildings, nor any vestige of village or city round about them. They lie like a little company of ships becalmed on a far-away sea.

Then look farther to the south. Beyond the widening

branches of the lagoon, and rising out of the bright lake into which they gather, there are a multitude of towers, dark, and scattered among square-set shapes of clustered palaces, a long and irregular line fretting the southern sky.

Mother and daughter, you behold them both in their widowhood,—TORCELLO, AND VENICE.

Thirteen hundred years ago, the grey moorland looked as it does this day, and the purple mountains stood as radiantly in the deep distances of evening; but on the line of the horizon, there were strange fires mixed with the light of sunset, and the lament of many human voices mixed with the fretting of the waves on their ridges of sand. The flames rose from the ruins of Altinum; the lament from the multitude of its people, seeking, like Israel of old, a refuge from the sword in the paths of the sea.

The cattle are feeding and resting upon the site of the city that they left; the mower's scythe swept this day at dawn over the chief street of the city that they built, and the swathes of soft grass are now sending up their scent into the night air, the only incense that fills the temple of their ancient worship. Let us go down into that little space of meadow land.

The inlet which runs nearest to the base of the campanile is not that by which Torcello is commonly approached. Another, somewhat broader, and overhung by alder copse, winds out of the main channel of the lagoon up to the very edge of the little meadow which was once the Piazza of the city, and there, stayed by a few grey stones which present some semblance of a quay, forms its boundary at one extremity. Hardly larger than an ordinary English farm-yard, and roughly enclosed on each side by broken palings and hedges of honeysuckle and briar, the narrow field retires from the water's edge, traversed by a scarcely traceable footpath, for some forty or fifty paces, and then expanding into the form of a small square, with buildings on three sides of it, the fourth being that which opens to the water. Two of these, that on our left and that in front of us as we approach from the canal, are so small that they might well be taken for the out-houses of the farm, though the first is a conventual building, and the other aspires to the title of the "Palazzo publico," both dating as far back as the beginning

of the fourteenth century; the third, the octagonal church of Santa Fosca, is far more ancient than either, yet hardly on a larger scale. Though the pillars of the portico which surrounds it are of pure Greek marble, and their capitals are enriched with delicate sculpture, they, and the arches they sustain, together only raise the roof to the height of a cattle-shed; and the first strong impression which the spectator receives from the whole scene is, that whatever sin it may have been which has on this spot been visited with so utter a desolation, it could not at least have been ambition. Nor will this impression be diminished as we approach, or enter, the larger church to which the whole group of building is subordinate. It has evidently been built by men in flight and distress, who sought in the hurried erection of their island church such a shelter for their earnest and sorrowful worship as, on the one hand, could not attract the eyes of their enemies by its splendour, and yet, on the other, might not awaken too bitter feelings by its contrast with the churches which they had seen destroyed. There is visible everywhere a simple and tender effort to recover some of the form of the temples which they had loved, and to do honour to God by that which they were erecting, while distress and humiliation prevented the desire, and prudence precluded the admission, either of luxury of ornament or magnificence of plan. The exterior is absolutely devoid of decoration, with the exception only of the western entrance and the lateral door, of which the former has carved sideposts and architrave, and the latter, crosses of rich sculpture; while the massy stone shutters of the windows, turning on huge rings of stone, which answer the double purpose of stanchions and brackets, cause the whole building rather to resemble a refuge from Alpine storm than the cathedral of a populous city; and, internally, the two solemn mosaics of the eastern and western extremities,—one representing the Last Judgment, the other the Madonna, her tears falling as her hands are raised to bless,—and the noble range of pillars which enclose the space between, terminated by the high throne for the pastor and the semicircular raised seats for the superior clergy, are expressive at once of the deep sorrow and the sacred courage of men who had no home left them upon earth, but who looked for one to come, of men

"persecuted but not forsaken, cast down but not destroyed."

I am not aware of any other early church in Italy which has this peculiar expression in so marked a degree; and it is so consistent with all that Christian architecture ought to express in every age (for the actual condition of the exiles who built the cathedral of Torcello is exactly typical of the spiritual condition which every Christian ought to recognise in himself, a state of homelessness on earth, except so far as he can make the Most High his habitation), that I would rather fix the mind of the reader on this general character than on the separate details, however interesting, of the architecture itself.

III

AND now come with me, for I have kept you too long from your gondola: come with me, on an autumnal morning, through the dark gates of Padua, and let us take the broad road leading towards the East.

It lies level, for a league or two, between its elms, and vine festoons full laden, their thin leaves veined into scarlet hectic, and their clusters deepened into gloomy blue; then mounts an embankment above the Brenta, and runs between the river and the broad plain, which stretches to the north in endless lines of mulberry and maize. The Brenta flows slowly, but strongly; a muddy volume of yellowish-grey water, that neither hastens nor slackens, but glides heavily between its monotonous banks, with here and there a short babbling eddy twisted for an instant into its opaque surface, and vanishing, as if something had been dragged into it and gone down. Dusty and shadeless, the road fares along the dyke on its northern side; and the tall white tower of Dolo is seen trembling in the heat mist far away, and never seems nearer than it did at first. Presently, you pass one of the much vaunted "villas on the Brenta:" a glaring, spectral shell of brick and stucco, its windows with painted architraves like picture-frames, and a court-yard paved with pebbles in front of it, all burning in the thick glow of the

feverish sunshine, but fenced from the high road, for magnificence' sake, with goodly posts and chains; then another, of Kew Gothic, with Chinese variations, painted red and green; a third, composed for the greater part of dead-wall, with fictitious windows painted upon it, each with a pea-green blind, and a classical architrave in bad perspective; and a fourth, with stucco figures set on the top of its garden-wall: some antique, like the kind to be seen at the corner of the New Road, and some of clumsy grotesque dwarfs, with fat bodies and large boots. This is the architecture to which her studies of the Renaissance have conducted modern Italy.

The sun climbs steadily, and warms into intense white the walls of the little piazza of Dolo, where we change horses. Another dreary stage among the now divided branches of the Brenta, forming irregular and half-stagnant canals; with one or two more villas on the other side of them, but these of the old Venetian type, which we may have recognised before at Padua, and sinking fast into utter ruin, black, and rent, and lonely, set close to the edge of the dull water with what were once small gardens beside them, kneaded into mud, and with blighted fragments of gnarled hedges and broken stakes for their fencing; and here and there a few fragments of marble steps, which have once given them graceful access from the water's edge, now settling into the mud in broken joints, all aslope, and slippery with green weed. At last the road turns sharply to the north, and there is an open space, covered with bent grass, on the right of it: but do not look that way.

Five minutes more, and we are in the upper room of the little inn at Mestre, glad of a moment's rest in shade. The table is (always, I think) covered with a cloth of nominal white and perennial grey, with plates and glasses at due intervals, and small loaves of a peculiar white bread, made with oil, and more like knots of flour than bread. The view from its balcony is not cheerful: a narrow street, with a solitary brick church and barren campanile on the other side of it; and some conventional buildings, with a few crimson remnants of fresco about their windows; and, between them and the street, a ditch with some slow current in it, and one or two small houses beside it, one with an arbour of roses at its door, as in an English tea-garden; the air, however, about us

having in it nothing of roses, but a close smell of garlic and crabs, warmed by the smoke of various stands of hot chestnuts. There is much vociferation also going on beneath the window respecting certain wheelbarrows which are in rivalry for our baggage; we appease their rivalry with our best patience, and follow them down the narrow street.

We have but walked some two hundred yards when we come to a low wharf or quay, at the extremity of a canal, with long steps on each side down to the water, which latter we fancy for an instant has become black with stagnation; another glance undeceives us,—it is covered with the black boats of Venice. We enter one of them, rather to try if they be real boats or not, than with any definite purpose, and glide away; at first feeling as if the water were yielding continually beneath the boat and letting her sink into soft vacancy. It is something clearer than any water we have seen lately, and of a pale green; the banks only two or three feet above it, of mud and rank grass, with here and there a stunted tree; gliding swiftly past the small casement of the gondola, as if they were dragged by upon a painted scene.

Stroke by stroke, we count the plunges of the oar, each heaving up the side of the boat slightly as her silver beak shoots forward. We lose patience, and extricate ourselves from the cushions: the sea air blows keenly by, as we stand leaning on the roof of the floating cell. In front, nothing to be seen but long canal and level bank; to the west, the tower of Mestre is lowering fast, and behind it there have risen purple shapes, of the colour of dead rose-leaves, all round the horizon, feebly defined against the afternoon sky,—the Alps of Bassano. Forward still: the endless canal bends at last, and then breaks into intricate angles about some low bastions, now torn to pieces and staggering in ugly rents towards the water,—the bastions of the fort of Malghera. Another turn, and another perspective of canal; but not interminable. The silver beak cleaves it fast,—it widens: the rank grass of the banks sinks lower, and lower, and at last dies in tawny knots along an expanse of weedy shore. Over it, on the right, but a few years back, we might have seen the lagoon stretching to the horizon, and the warm southern sky bending over Malamocco to the sea. Now we can see nothing but what seems a low and monotonous dockyard

wall, with flat arches to let the tide through it;—this is the railroad bridge, conspicuous above all things. But at the end of those dismal arches there rises, out of the wide water, a straggling line of low and confused brick buildings, which, but for the many towers which are mingled among them, might be the suburbs of an English manufacturing town. Four or five domes, pale, and apparently at a greater distance, rise over the centre of the line; but the object which first catches the eye is a sullen cloud of black smoke brooding over the northern half of it, and which issues from the belfry of a church.

It is Venice.

ST. MARK'S

I WISH that the reader, before I bring him into St. Mark's Place, would imagine himself for a little time in a quiet English cathedral town, and walk with me to the west front of its cathedral. Let us go together up the more retired street, at the end of which we can see the pinnacles of one of the towers, and then through the low grey gateway, with its battlemented top and small latticed window in the centre, into the inner private-looking road or close, where nothing goes in but the carts of the tradesmen who supply the bishop and the chapter, and where there are little shaven grass-plots, fenced in by neat rails, before old-fashioned groups of somewhat diminutive and excessively trim houses, with little oriel and bay windows jutting out here and there, and deep wooden cornices and eaves painted cream colour and white, and small porches to their doors in the shape of cockle-shells, or little, crooked, thick, indescribable wooden gables warped a little on one side; and so forward till we come to larger houses, also old-fashioned, but of red brick, and with gardens behind them, and fruit walls, which show here and there, among the nectarines, the vestiges of an old cloister arch or shaft, and looking in front on the cathedral square itself, laid out in rigid divisions of smooth grass and gravel walk, yet not uncheerful, especially on the sunny side where the canons' children are walking with their nursery-maids. And so,

taking care not to tread on the grass, we will go along the straight walk to the west front, and there stand for a time, looking up at its deep-pointed porches and the dark places between their pillars where there were statues once, and where the fragments, here and there, of a stately figure are still left, which has in it the likeness of a king, perhaps indeed a king on earth, perhaps a saintly king long ago in heaven; and so higher and higher up to the great mouldering wall of rugged sculpture and confused arcades, shattered, and grey, and grisly with heads of dragons and mocking fiends, worn by the rain and swirling winds into yet unseemlier shape, and coloured on their stony scales by the deep russet-orange lichen, melancholy gold; and so, higher still, to the bleak towers, so far above that the eye loses itself among the bosses of their traceries, though they are rude and strong, and only sees like a drift of eddying black points, now closing, now scattering, and now settling suddenly into invisible places among the bosses and flowers, the crowd of restless birds that fill the old square with that strange clangour of theirs, so harsh and yet so soothing, like the cries of birds on a solitary coast between the cliffs and sea.

Think for a little while of that scene, and the meaning of all its small formalisms, mixed with its serene sublimity. Estimate its secluded, continuous, drowsy felicities, and its evidence of the sense and steady performance of such kind of duties as can be regulated by the cathedral clock; and weigh the influence of those dark towers on all who have passed through the lonely square at their feet for centuries, and on all who have seen them rising far away over the wooded plain, or catching on their square masses the last rays of the sunset, when the city at their feet was indicated only by the mist at the bend of the river. And then let us quickly recollect that we are in Venice, and land at the extremity of the Calla Lunga San Moisè, which may be considered as there answering to the secluded street that led us to our English cathedral gateway.

We find ourselves in a paved alley, some seven feet wide where it is widest, full of people, and resonant with cries of itinerant salesmen,—a shriek in their beginning, and dying away into a kind of brazen ringing, all the worse for

its confinement between the high houses of the passage along which we have to make our way. Overhead an inextricable confusion of rugged shutters, and iron balconies and chimney flues pushed out on brackets to save room, and arched windows with projecting sills of Istrian stone, and gleams of green leaves here and there where a fig-tree branch escapes over a lower wall from some inner cortile, leading the eye up to the narrow stream of blue sky high over all. On each side, a row of shops, as densely set as may be, occupying, in fact, intervals between the square stone shafts, about eight feet high, which carry the first floors: intervals of which one is narrow and serves as a door; the other is, in the more respectable shops, wainscotted to the height of the counter and glazed above, but in those of the poorer tradesmen left open to the ground, and the wares laid on benches and tables in the open air, the light in all cases entering at the front only, and fading away in a few feet from the threshold into a gloom which the eye from without cannot penetrate, but which is generally broken by a ray or two from a feeble lamp at the back of the shop, suspended before a print of the Virgin. The less pious shopkeeper sometimes leaves his lamp unlighted, and is contented with a penny print; the more religious one has his print coloured and set in a little shrine with a gilded or figured fringe, with perhaps a faded flower or two on each side, and his lamp burning brilliantly. Here at the fruiterer's, where the dark-green water-melons are heaped upon the counter like cannon balls, the Madonna has a tabernacle of fresh laurel leaves; but the pewterer next door has let his lamp out, and there is nothing to be seen in his shop but the dull gleam of the studded patterns on the copper pans, hanging from his roof in the darkness. Next comes a "Vendita Frittole e Liquori," where the Virgin, enthroned in a very humble manner beside a tallow candle on a back shelf, presides over certain ambrosial morsels of a nature too ambiguous to be defined or enumerated. But a few steps farther on, at the regular wine-shop of the calle, where we are offered "Vino Nostrani a Soldi 28.32," the Madonna is in great glory, enthroned above ten or a dozen large red casks of three-year-old vintage, and flanked by goodly ranks of bottles of Maraschino, and two crimson lamps; and for the

evening, when the gondoliers will come to drink out, under her auspices, the money they have gained during the day, she will have a whole chandelier.

A yard or two farther, we pass the hostelry of the Black Eagle, and, glancing as we pass through the square door of marble, deeply moulded, in the outer wall, we see the shadows of its pergola of vines resting on an ancient well, with a pointed shield carved on its side; and so presently emerge on the bridge and Campo San Moisè, whence to the entrance into St. Mark's Place, called the Bocca di Piazza (mouth of the square), the Venetian character is nearly destroyed, first by the frightful façade of San Moisè, which we will pause at another time to examine, and then by the modernising of the shops as they near the piazza, and the mingling with the lower Venetian populace of lounging groups of English and Austrians. We will push fast through them into the shadow of the pillars at the end of the "Bocca di Piazza," and then we forget them all; for between those pillars there opens a great light, and, in the midst of it, as we advance slowly, the vast tower of St. Mark seems to lift itself visibly forth from the level field of chequered stones; and, on each side, the countless arches prolong themselves into ranged symmetry, as if the rugged and irregular houses that pressed together above us in the dark alley had been struck back into sudden obedience and lovely order, and all their rude casements and broken walls had been transformed into arches charged with goodly sculpture, and fluted shafts of delicate stone.

And well may they fall back, for beyond those troops of ordered arches there rises a vision out of the earth, and all the great square seems to have opened from it in a kind of awe, that we may see it far away;—a multitude of pillars and white domes, clustered into a long low pyramid of coloured light; a treasure-heap, it seems, partly of gold, and partly of opal and mother-of-pearl, hollowed beneath into five great vaulted porches, ceiled with fair mosaic, and beset with sculpture of alabaster, clear as amber and delicate as ivory,—sculpture fantastic and involved, of palm leaves and lilies, and grapes and pomegranates, and birds clinging and fluttering among the branches, all twined together into an endless network of buds and plumes; and, in the midst

of it, the solemn forms of angels, sceptred, and robed to the feet, and leaning to each other across the gates, their figures indistinct among the gleaming of the golden ground through the leaves beside them, interrupted and dim, like the morning light as it faded back among the branches of Eden, when first its gates were angel-guarded long ago. And round the walls of the porches there are set pillars of variegated stones, jasper and porphyry, and deep-green serpentine spotted with flakes of snow, and marbles, that half refuse and half yield to the sunshine, Cleopatra-like "their bluest veins to kiss"—the shadow, as it steals back from them, revealing line after line of azure undulation, as a receding tide leaves the waved sand; their capitals rich with interwoven tracery, rooted knots of herbage, and drifting leaves of acanthus and vine, and mystical signs, all beginning and ending in the Cross; and above them, in the broad archivolts, a continuous chain of language and of life—angels, and the signs of heaven, and the labours of men, each in its appointed season upon the earth; and above these, another range of glittering pinnacles, mixed with white arches edged with scarlet flowers,—a confusion of delight, amidst which the breasts of the Greek horses are seen blazing in their breadth of golden strength, and the St. Mark's Lion, lifted on a blue field covered with stars, until at last, as if in ecstasy, the crests of the arches break into a marble foam, and toss themselves far into the blue sky in flashes and wreaths of sculptured spray, as if the breakers on the Lido shore had been frost-bound before they fell, and the sea-nymphs had inlaid them with coral and amethyst.

Between that grim cathedral of England and this, what an interval! There is a type of it in the very birds that haunt them; for, instead of the restless crowd, hoarse-voiced and sable-winged, drifting on the bleak upper air, the St. Mark's porches are full of doves, that nestle among the marble foliage, and mingle the soft iridescence of their living plumes, changing at every motion, with the tints, hardly less lovely, that have stood unchanged for seven hundred years.

And what effect has this splendour on those who pass beneath it? You may walk from sunrise to sunset, to and fro, before the gateway of St. Mark's and you will not see an

eye lifted to it, nor a countenance brightened by it. Priest and layman, soldier and civilian, rich and poor, pass by it alike regardlessly. Up to the very recesses of the porches, the meanest tradesmen of the city push their counters; nay, the foundations of its pillars are themselves the seats—not “of them that sell doves” for sacrifice, but of the venders of toys and caricatures. Round the whole square in front of the church there is almost a continuous line of cafés, where the idle Venetians of the middle classes lounge, and read empty journals; in its centre the Austrian bands play during the time of vespers, their martial music jarring with the organ notes,—the march drowning the miserere, and the sullen crowd thickening round them,—a crowd, which, if it had its will, would stiletto every soldier that pipes to it. And in the recesses of the porches, all day long, knots of men of the lowest classes, unemployed and listless, lie basking in the sun like lizards; and unregarded children,—every heavy glance of their young eyes full of desperation and stony depravity, and their throats hoarse with cursing,—gamble, and fight, and snarl, and sleep, hour after hour, clashing their bruised centesimi upon the marble ledges of the church porch. And the images of Christ and His angels look down upon it continually.

That we may not enter the church out of the midst of the horror of this, let us turn aside under the portico which looks towards the sea, and passing round within the two massive pillars brought from St. Jean d’Acre, we shall find the gate of the Baptistery; let us enter there. The heavy door closes behind us instantly, and the light, and the turbulence of the Piazzetta, are together shut out by it.

We are in a low vaulted room; vaulted, not with arches, but with small cupolas starred with gold, and chequered with gloomy figures: in the centre is a bronze font charged with rich bas-reliefs, a small figure of the Baptist standing above it in a single ray of light that glances across the narrow room, dying as it falls from a window high in the wall, and the first thing that it strikes, and the only thing that it strikes brightly, is a tomb. We hardly know if it be a tomb indeed; for it is like a narrow couch set beside the window, low-roofed and curtained, so that it might seem, but that it is some height above the pavement, to have been drawn

towards the window, that the sleeper might be wakened early;—only there are two angels who have drawn the curtain back, and are looking down upon him. Let us look also, and thank that gentle light that rests upon his forehead for ever, and dies away upon his breast.

The face is of a man in middle life, but there are two deep furrows right across the forehead, dividing it like the foundations of a tower: the height of it above is bound by the fillet of the ducal cap. The rest of the features are singularly small and delicate, the lips sharp, perhaps the sharpness of death being added to that of the natural lines; but there is a sweet smile upon them, and a deep serenity upon the whole countenance. The roof of the canopy above has been blue, filled with stars; beneath, in the centre of the tomb on which the figure rests, is a seated figure of the Virgin, and the border of it all around is of flowers and soft leaves, growing rich and deep, as if in a field in summer.

It is the Doge Andrea Dandolo, a man early great among the great of Venice; and early lost. She chose him for her king in his 36th year; he died ten years later, leaving behind him that history to which we owe half of what we know of her former fortunes.

Look round at the room in which he lies. The floor of it is of rich mosaic, encompassed by a low seat of red marble, and its walls are of alabaster, but worn and shattered, and darkly stained with age, almost a ruin,—in places the slabs of marble have fallen away altogether, and the rugged brick-work is seen through the rents, but all beautiful; the ravaging fissures fretting their way among the islands and channelled zones of the alabaster, and the time-stains on its translucent masses darkened into fields of rich golden brown, like the colour of seaweed when the sun strikes on it through deep sea. The light fades away into the recess of the chamber towards the altar, and the eye can hardly trace the lines of the bas-relief behind it of the baptism of Christ: but on the vaulting of the roof the figures are distinct, and there are seen upon it two great circles, one surrounded by the "Principalities and powers in heavenly places," of which Milton has expressed the ancient division in the single massy line,

"Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,"

and around the other, the Apostles; Christ the centre of both: and upon the walls, again and again repeated, the gaunt figure of the Baptist, in every circumstance of his life and death; and the streams of the Jordan running down between their cloyen rocks; the axe laid to the root of a fruitless tree that springs upon their shore. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire." Yes, verily: to be baptized with fire, or to be cast therein; it is the choice set before all men. The march-notes still murmur through the grated window, and mingle with the sounding in our ears of the sentence of judgment, which the old Greek has written on that Baptistery wall. Venice has made her choice.

He who lies under that stony canopy would have taught her another choice, in his day, if she would have listened to him; but he and his counsels have long been forgotten by her, and the dust lies upon his lips.

Through the heavy door whose bronze network closes the place of his rest, let us enter the church itself. It is lost in still deeper twilight, to which the eye must be accustomed for some moments before the form of the building can be traced; and then there opens before us a vast cave, hewn out into the form of a Cross, and divided into shadowy aisles by many pillars. Round the domes of its roof the light enters only through narrow apertures like large stars; and here and there a ray or two from some far away casement wanders into the darkness, and casts a narrow phosphoric stream upon the waves of marble that heave and fall in a thousand colours along the floor. What else there is of light is from torches or silver lamps, burning ceaselessly in the recesses of the chapels; the roof sheeted with gold, and the polished walls covered with alabaster, give back at every curve and angle some feeble gleaming to the flames; and the glories round the heads of the sculptured saints flash out upon us as we pass them, and sink again into the gloom. Under foot and over head, a continual succession of crowded imagery, one picture passing into another, as in a dream; forms beautiful and terrible mixed together; dragons and serpents, and ravening beasts of prey, and graceful birds that in the midst of them drink from running fountains and feed from vases of crystal; the passions and the pleasures of human life

symbolised together, and the mystery of its redemption; for the mazes of interwoven lines and changeful pictures lead always at last to the Cross, lifted and carved in every place and upon every stone; sometimes with the serpent of eternity wrapt round it, sometimes with doves beneath its arms, and sweet herbage growing forth from its feet; but conspicuous most of all on the great rood that crosses the church before the altar, raised in bright blazonry against the shadow of the apse. And although in the recesses of the aisles and chapels, when the mist of the incense hangs heavily, we may see continually a figure traced in faint lines upon their marble, a woman standing with her eyes raised to heaven, and the inscription above her, "Mother of God," she is not here the presiding deity. It is the Cross that is first seen, and always, burning in the centre of the temple; and every dome and hollow of its roof has the figure of Christ in the utmost height of it, raised in power, or returning in judgment.

Nor is this interior without effect on the minds of the people. At every hour of the day there are groups collected before the various shrines, and solitary worshippers scattered through the darker places of the church, evidently in prayer both deep and reverent, and, for the most part, profoundly sorrowful. The devotees at the greater number of the renowned shrines of Romanism may be seen murmuring their appointed prayers with wandering eyes and unengaged gestures; but the step of the stranger does not disturb those who kneel on the pavement of St. Mark's; and hardly a moment passes, from early morning to sunset, in which we may not see some half-veiled figure enter beneath the Arabian porch, cast itself into long abasement on the floor of the temple, and then rising slowly with more confirmed step, and with a passionate kiss and clasp of the arms given to the feet of the crucifix, by which the lamps burn always in the northern aisle, leave the church, as if comforted.

THE LEGEND OF THE BRIDES OF VENICE

THE place is one renowned in the history of Venice, the space of ground before the Church of Santa Maria Formosa; a spot which, after the Rialto and St. Mark's Place, ought to possess a peculiar interest in the mind of the traveller, in consequence of its connection with the most touching and true legend of the Brides of Venice. That legend is related at length in every Venetian history, and, finally, has been told by the poet Rogers, in a way which renders it impossible for any one to tell it after him. I have only, therefore, to remind the reader that the capture of the brides took place in the cathedral church, St. Pietro di Castello; and that this of Santa Maria Formosa is connected with the tale, only because it was yearly visited with prayers by the Venetian maidens, on the anniversary of their ancestors' deliverance. For that deliverance, their thanks were to be rendered to the Virgin; and there was no church then dedicated to the Virgin, in Venice, except this.

Neither of the cathedral church, nor of this dedicated to St. Mary the Beautiful, is one stone left upon another. But, from that which has been raised on the site of the latter, we may receive a most important lesson, introductory to our immediate subject, if first we glance back to the traditional history of the church which has been destroyed.

No more honourable epithet than "traditional" can be attached to what is recorded concerning it, yet I should grieve to lose the legend of its first erection. The Bishop of Uderzo, driven by the Lombards from his bishopric, as he was praying, beheld in a vision the Virgin Mother, who ordered him to found a church in her honour, in the place where he should see a white cloud rest. And when he went out, the white cloud went before him; and on the place where it rested he built a church, and it was called the Church of St. Mary the Beautiful, from the loveliness of the form in which she had appeared in the vision.¹

The first church stood only for about two centuries. It

¹ Or from the brightness of the cloud.

The Legend of the Brides of Venice 175

was rebuilt in 864, and enriched with various relics some fifty years later; relics belonging principally to St. Nicodemus, and much lamented when they and the church were together destroyed by fire in 1105.

It was then rebuilt in "*magnifica forma*," much resembling, according to Corner, the architecture of the chancel of St. Mark; but the information which I find in various writers, as to the period at which it was reduced to its present condition, is both sparing and contradictory.

Thus, by Corner, we are told that this church, resembling St. Mark's, "remained untouched for more than four centuries," until, in 1689, it was thrown down by an earthquake, and restored by the piety of a rich merchant, Turrin Toroni, "*in ornatissima forma*;" and that, for the greater beauty of the renewed church, it had added to it two façades of marble. With this information that of the Padre dell' Oratorio agrees, only he gives the date of the earlier rebuilding of the church in 1175, and ascribes it to an architect of the name of Barbetta. But Quadri, in his usually accurate little guide, tells us that this Barbetta rebuilt the church in the fourteenth century; and that of the two façades, so much admired by Corner, one is of the sixteenth century, and its architect unknown; and the rest of the church is of the seventeenth, "*in the style of Sansovino*."

There is no occasion to examine, or endeavour to reconcile, these conflicting accounts. All that it is necessary for the reader to know is, that every vestige of the church in which the ceremony took place was destroyed *at least* as early as 1689; and that the ceremony itself, having been abolished in the close of the fourteenth century, is only to be conceived as taking place in that more ancient church, resembling St. Mark's, which, even according to Quadri, existed until that period. I would, therefore, endeavour to fix the reader's mind, for a moment, on the contrast between the former and latter aspect of this plot of ground; the former, when it had its Byzantine church, and its yearly procession of the Doge and the Brides; and the latter, when it has its Renaissance church "*in the style of Sansovino*," and its yearly honouring is done away.

And, first, let us consider for a little the significance and nobleness of that early custom of the Venetians, which

brought about the attack and the rescue of the year 943; that there should be but one marriage day for the nobles of the whole nation, so that all might rejoice together; and that the sympathy might be full, not only of the families who that year beheld the alliance of their children, and prayed for them in one crowd, weeping before the altar, but of all the families of the state, who saw, in the day which brought happiness to others, the anniversary of their own. Imagine the strong bond of brotherhood thus sanctified among them, and consider also the effect on the minds of the youth of the state; the greater deliberation and openness necessarily given to the contemplation of marriage, to which all the people were solemnly to bear testimony; the more lofty and unselfish tone which it would give to all their thoughts. It was the exact contrary of stolen marriage. It was marriage to which God and man were taken for witnesses, and every eye was invoked for its glance, and every tongue for its prayers.

Later historians have delighted themselves in dwelling on the pageantry of the marriage day itself, but I do not find that they have authority for the splendour of their descriptions. I cannot find a word in the older Chronicles about the jewels or dress of the brides, and I believe the ceremony to have been more quiet and homely than is usually supposed. The only sentence which gives colour to the usual accounts of it is one of Sansovino's, in which he says that the magnificent dress of the brides in his day was founded "on ancient custom." However this may have been, the circumstances of the rite were otherwise very simple. Each maiden brought her dowry with her in a small "cassetta," or chest; they went first to the cathedral, and waited for the youths, who having come, they heard mass together, and the bishop preached to them and blessed them; and so each bridegroom took his bride and her dowry, and bore her home.

It seems that the alarm given by the attack of the pirates put an end to the custom of fixing one day for all marriages: but the main objects of the institution were still attained by the perfect publicity given to the marriages of all the noble families; the bridegroom standing in the Court of the Ducal Palace to receive congratulations on his betrothal,

and the whole body of the nobility attending the nuptials, and rejoicing, "as at some personal good fortune; since, by the constitution of the state, they are for ever incorporated together, as if of one and the same family." But the festival of the 2nd of February, after the year 943, seems to have been observed only in memory of the deliverance of the brides, and no longer set apart for public nuptials.

There is much difficulty in reconciling the various accounts, or distinguishing the inaccurate ones, of the manner of keeping this memorable festival. I shall first give Sansovino's, which is the popular one, and then note the points of importance in the counter-statements. Sansovino says that the success of the pursuit of the pirates was owing to the ready help and hard fighting of the men of the district of Sta. Maria Formosa, for the most part trunkmakers; and that they, having been presented after the victory to the Doge and the Senate, were told to ask some favour for their reward. "The good men then said that they desired the Prince, with his wife and the Signory, to visit every year the church of their district, on the day of its feast. And the Prince asking them, 'Suppose it should rain?' they answered, 'We will give you hats to cover you; and if you are thirsty, we will give you to drink.' Whence it is that the Vicar, in the name of the people, presents to the Doge, on his visit, two flasks of malvoisie¹ and two oranges; and presents to him two gilded hats, bearing the arms of the Pope, of the Prince, and of the Vicar. And thus was instituted the Feast of the Maries, which was called noble and famous because the people from all around came together to behold it. And it was celebrated in this manner: . . ." The account which follows is somewhat prolix; but its substance is, briefly, that twelve maidens were elected, two for each division of the city; and that it was decided by lot which contrade, or quarters of the town, should provide them with dresses. This was done at enormous expense, one contrada contending with another, and even the jewels of the treasury of St. Mark being lent for the occasion to the "Maries," as the twelve damsels were called. They, being thus dressed with gold, and silver, and jewels, went in their galley to St. Mark's for the Doge, who joined them with the

¹ English, "Malmsey."

Signory, and went first to San Pietro di Castello to hear mass on St. Mark's day, the 31st of January, and to Santa Maria Formosa on the 2nd of February, the intermediate day being spent in passing in procession through the streets of the city; "and sometimes there arose quarrels about the places they should pass through, for every one wanted them to pass by his house."

Nearly the same account is given by Corner, who, however, does not say anything about the hats or the malvoisie. These, however, we find again in the *Matricola de' Casseleri*, which, of course, sets the services of the trunkmakers and the privileges obtained by them in the most brilliant light. The quaintness of the old Venetian is hardly to be rendered into English. "And you must know that the said trunkmakers were the men who were the cause of such victory, and of taking the galley, and of cutting all the Triestines to pieces, because, at that time, they were valiant men and well in order. The which victory was on the 2nd February, on the day of the Madonna of candles. And at the request and entreaties of the said trunkmakers, it was decreed that the Doge, every year, as long as Venice shall endure, should go on the eve of the said feast to vespers in the said church, with the Signory. And be it noted, that the vicar is obliged to give to the Doge two flasks of malvoisie, with two oranges besides. And so it is observed, and will be observed always." The reader must observe the continual confusion between St. Mark's day the 31st of January, and Candlemas the 2nd of February. The fact appears to be, that the marriage day in the old republic was St. Mark's day, and the recovery of the brides was the same day at evening; so that, as we are told by Sansovino, the commemorative festival began on that day, but it was continued to the day of the Purification, that especial thanks might be rendered to the Virgin; and, the visit to Sta. Maria Formosa being the most important ceremony of the whole festival, the old chroniclers, and even Sansovino, got confused, and asserted the victory itself to have taken place on the day appointed for that pilgrimage.

THE BRIDES OF VENICE

BY SAMUEL ROGERS

It was St. Mary's Eve, and all poured forth
For some great festival. The fisher came
From his green islet, bringing o'er the waves
His wife and little one; the husbandman
From the Firm Land, with many a friar and nun,
And village-maiden, her first flight from home,
Crowding the common ferry. All arrived;
And in his straw the prisoner turned and listened,
So great the stir in VENICE. Old and young
Thronged her three hundred bridges; the grave Turk,
Turbaned, long-vested, and the cozening Jew,
In yellow hat and thread-bare gaberdine,
Hurrying along. For, as the custom was,
The noblest sons and daughters of the State,
Whose names are written in the Book of Gold,
Were on that day to solemnise their nuptials.

At noon a distant murmur thro' the crowd,
Rising and rolling on, proclaimed them near;
And never from their earliest hour was seen
Such splendour or such beauty. Two and two,
(The richest tapestry unrolled before them)
First came the Brides; each in her virgin-veil,
Nor unattended by her bridal maids,
The two that, step by step, behind her bore
The small but precious caskets that contained
The dowry and the presents. On she moved,
Her eyes cast down, and holding in her hand
A fan, that gently waved, of ostrich-plumes.
Her veil, transparent as the gossamer,
Fell from beneath a starry diadem;
And on her dazzling neck a jewel shone,
Ruby or diamond or dark amethyst;
A jewelled chain, in many a winding wreath,
Wreathing her gold brocade.

Before the Church,
That venerable structure now no more

On the sea-brink, another train they met,
No strangers, nor unlooked for ere they came,
Brothers to some, still dearer to the rest;
Each in his hand bearing his cap and plume,
And, as he walked, with modest dignity
Folding his scarlet mantle. At the gate
They join; and slowly up the bannered aisle
Led by the choir, with due solemnity
Range round the altar. In his vestments there
The Patriarch stands; and, while the anthem flows,
Who can look on unmoved—the dream of years
Just now fulfilling! Here a mother weeps,
Rejoicing in her daughter. There a son
Blesses the day that is to make her his;
While she shines forth thro' all her ornament,
Her beauty heightened by her hopes and fears.

At length the rite is ending. All fall down,
All of all ranks; and, stretching out his hands,
Apostle-like, the holy man proceeds
To give the blessing—not a stir, a breath;
When hark, a din of voices from without,
And shrieks and groans and outcries as in battle!
And lo, the door is burst, the curtain rent,
And armed ruffians, robbers from the deep,
Savage, uncouth, led on by BARBARO,
And his six brothers in their coats of steel,
Are standing on the threshold! Statue-like,
Awhile they gaze on the fallen multitude,
Each with his sabre up, in act to strike;
Then, as at once recovering from the spell,
Rush forward to the altar, and as soon
Are gone again—amid no clash of arms
Bearing away the maidens and the treasures.

Where are they now?—ploughing the distant waves,
Their sails out-spread and given to the wind,
They on their decks triumphant. On they speed,
Steering for ISTRIA; their accursed barks
(Well are they known, the galliot and the galley),
Freighted, alas, with all that life endears!
The richest argosies were poor to them!

Now hadst thou seen along that crowded shore

The matrons running wild, their festal dress
A strange and moving contrast to their grief;
And thro' the city, wander where thou wouldst,
The men half armed and arming—everywhere
As roused from slumber by the stirring trump;
One with a shield, one with a casque and spear;
One with an axe severing in two the chain
Of some old pinnace. Not a raft, a plank,
But on that day was drifting. In an hour
Half VENICE was afloat. But long before,
Frantic with grief and scorning all controul,
The Youths were gone in a light brigantine,
Lying at anchor near the Arsenal;
Each having sworn, and by the holy rood,
To slay or to be slain.

And from the tower
The watchman gives the signal. In the East
A ship is seen, and making for the Port;
Her flag St. Mark's. And now she turns the point,
Over the waters like a sea-bird flying!
Ha, 'tis the same, 'tis theirs! from stern to prow
Green with victorious wreaths, she comes to bring
All that was lost.—Coasting, with narrow search,
FRIULI—like a tiger in his spring,
They had surprised the Corsairs where they lay
Sharing the spoil in blind security
And casting lots—had slain them, one and all,
All to the last, and flung them far and wide
Into the sea, their proper element;
Him first, as first in rank, whose name so long
Had hushed the babes of VENICE, and who yet,
Breathing a little, in his look retained
The fierceness of his soul.

Thus were the Brides
Lost and recovered; and what now remained
But to give Thanks? Twelve breast-plates and twelve
crowns,
By the young Victors to the Patron-Saint
Vowed in the field, inestimable gifts
Flaming with gems and gold, were in due time
Laid at his feet; and ever to preserve

The memory of a day so full of change,
From joy to grief, from grief to joy again,
Thro' many an age, as oft as it came round,
'Twas held religiously. The Doge resigned
His crimson for pure ermine, visiting
At earliest dawn St. Mary's silver shrine;
And thro' the city, in a stately barge
Of gold, were borne with songs and symphonies
Twelve ladies young and noble. Clad they were
In bridal white with bridal ornaments,
Each in her glittering veil; and on the deck,
As on a burnished throne, they glided by;
No window or balcony but adorned
With hangings of rich texture, not a roof
But covered with beholders, and the air
Vocal with joy. Onward they went, their oars
Moving in concert with the harmony,
Thro' the Rialto to the Ducal Palace,
And at a banquet, served with honour there,
Sat representing, in the eyes of all,
Eyes not unwet, I ween, with grateful tears,
Their lovely ancestors, the BRIDES OF VENICE.

THE BATTLE OF MONTENOTTE

"My patent of nobility" (said Napoleon) "dates from the Battle of Montenotte."

I

Slow lifts the night her starry host
Above the mountain chain
That guards the grey Ligurian coast,
And lights the Lombard plain;
That plain, that, softening on the sight,
Lies blue beneath the balm of night,
With lapse of rivers lulled, that glide
In lustre broad of living tide;
Or pause for hours of peace beside
The shores they double, and divide,
To feed with heaven's reverted hue

The clustered vine's expanding blue.
 With crystal flow, for evermore,
 They lave a blood-polluted shore;
 Ah! not the snows, whose wreaths renew
 Their radiant depth with stainless dew,
 Can bid their banks be pure, or bless
 The guilty land with holiness.

II

In stormy waves whose wrath can reach
 The rocks that back the topmost beach,
 The midnight sea falls wild and deep
 Around Savona's marble steep,
 And Voltri's crescent bay.
 What fiery lines are these that flash
 Where fierce the breakers curl and crash,
 And fastest flies the spray?
 No moon has risen to mark the night,
 Nor such the flakes of phosphor light
 That wake along the southern wave,
 By Baiæ's cliff and Capri's cave,
 Until the dawn of day:
 The phosphor flame is soft and green
 Beneath the hollow surges seen;
 But these are dyed with dusky red
 Far on the fitful surface shed;
 And evermore, their glance between,
 The mountain gust is deeply stirred
 With low vibration, felt, and heard,
 Which winds and leaves confuse, in vain;
 It gathers through their maze again,
 Redoubling round the rocks it smote,
 Till falls in fear the night-bird's note;
 And every sound beside is still,
 But plash of torrent from the hill,
 And murmur by the branches made
 That bend above its bright cascade.

III

Hark, hark! the hollow Apennine
 Laughs in his heart afar;

Through all his vales he drinks like wine
 The deepening draught of war;
 For not with doubtful burst, or slow,
 That thunder shakes his breathless snow,
 But ceaseless rends, with rattling stroke,
 The veils of white volcano-smoke
 That o'er Legino's ridges rest,¹
 And writhe in Merla's vale:
 There lifts the Frank his triple crest,
 Crowned with its plumage pale;
 Though, clogged and dyed with stains of death,
 It scarce obeys the tempest's breath;
 And darker still, and deadlier press
 The war-clouds on its weariness.
 Far by the bright Bormida's banks
 The Austrian cheers his chosen ranks,
 In ponderous waves, that, where they check
 Rise o'er their own tumultuous wreck,
 Recoiling—crashing—gathering still
 In rage around that Island hill,
 Where stand the moveless Few—
 Few—fewer as the moments flit;
 Though shaft and shell their columns split
 As morning melts the dew,
 Though narrower yet their guarding grows,
 And hot the heaps of carnage close,
 In death's faint shade and fiery shock,
 They stand, one ridge of living rock,

¹ The Austrian centre, 10,000 strong, had been advanced to Montenotte, in order, if possible, to cut asunder the French force, which was following the route of the Corniche. It encountered at Montenotte only Colonel Rampon, at the head of 1200 men, who retiring to the redoubt at Monte Legino, defended it against the repeated attacks of the Austrians until nightfall—making his soldiers swear to conquer or die. The Austrian General Roccavina was severely wounded, and his successor, D'Argenteau, refused to continue the attack. Napoleon was lying at Savona, but set out after sunset with the divisions of Massena and Serrurier, and occupied the heights at Montenotte. At daybreak the Imperialists found themselves surrounded on all sides, and were totally defeated, with the loss of 2000 prisoners, and above 1000 killed and wounded (April 12, 1796).

This victory, the first gained by Napoleon, was the foundation of the success of the Italian campaign. Had Colonel Rampon been compelled to retire from Monte Legino, the fate of the world would probably have been changed.—*Vide* Alison, ch. xx.

Which steel may rend, and wave may wear,
 And bolt may crash, and blast may tear,
 But none can strike from its abiding:
 The flood, the flash, the steel, may bear
 Perchance destruction—not despair,
 And death—but not dividing.
 What matter? while their ground they keep,
 Though here a column—there a heap—
 Though these in wrath—and those in sleep,
 If all are there.

IV

Charge D'Argenteau! Fast flies the night,
 The snows look wan with inward light:
 Charge, D'Argenteau! Thy kingdom's power
 Wins not again this hope—nor hour:
 The force—the fate of France is thrown
 Behind those feeble shields;
 That ridge of death-defended stone
 Were worth a thousand fields!
 In vain—in vain! Thy broad array
 Breaks on their front of spears like spray:
 Thine hour hath struck—the dawning red
 Is o'er thy wavering standards shed;
 A darker dye thy folds shall take
 Before its utmost beams can break.

V

Out of its Eastern fountains
 The river of day is drawn,
 And the shadows of the mountains
 March downward from the dawn—
 The shadows of the ancient hills,
 Shortening as they go,
 Down beside the dancing rills
 Wearily and slow.
 The morning wind the mead hath kissed;
 It leads in narrow lines
 The shadows of the silver mist,
 To pause among the pines.

But where the sun is calm and hot,
And where the wind hath peace,
There is a shade that pauseth not,
And a sound that doth not cease.
The shade is like a sable river
Broken with sparkles bright;
The sound is like dead leaves that shiver
In the decay of night.

VI

Together came with pulse-like beat
The darkness, and the tread—
A motion calm—a murmur sweet,
Yet dreadful both, and dread;
Poised on the hill—a fringed shroud,
It wavered like the sea;
Then clove itself, as doth a cloud,
In sable columns three.
They fired no shot—they gave no sign—
They blew no battle-peal;
But down they came, in deadly line,
Like whirling bars of steel.
As fades the forest from its place,
Beneath the lava flood,
The Austrian host, before their face,
Was melted into blood:
They moved, as moves the solemn night,
With lulling, and release;
Before them, all was fear and flight,
Behind them, all was peace:
Before them flashed the roaring glen
With bayonet and brand;
Behind them lay the wrecks of men,
Like seaweed on the sand.

VII

But still, along the cumbered heath,
A vision strange and fair
Did fill the eyes that failed in death,
And darkened in despair;

Where blazed the battle wild and hot,
A youth, deep-eyed and pale,
Did move amidst the storm of shot,
As the fire of God through hail,
He moved, serene as spirits are,
And dying eyes might see
Above his head a crimson star
Burning continually.

VIII

With bended head, and breathless tread,
The traveller tracks that silent shore,
Oppressed with thoughts that seek the dead,
And visions that restore;
Or lightly trims his pausing bark,
Where lies the ocean lulled and dark,
Beneath the marble mounds that stay
The strength of many a bending bay,
And lace with silver lines the flow
Of tideless waters to and fro,
As drifts the breeze, or dies;
That scarce recalls its lightness, left
In many a purple-curtained cleft,
Whence to the softly lighted skies
Low flowers lift up their dark blue eyes,
To bring by fits the deep perfume
Alternate, as the bending bloom
Diffuses or denies.
Above, the slopes of mountain shine,
Where glows the citron, glides the vine,
And breathes the myrtle wildly bright,
And aloes lift their lamps of light,
And ceaseless sunbeams clothe the calm
Of orbèd pine and vaulted palm;
Dark trees, that sacred order keep,
And rise in temples o'er the steep—
Eternal shrines, whose columned shade
Though winds may shake, and frosts may fade,
And dateless years subdue,
Is softly builded, ever new,

By angel hands, and wears the dread
 And stillness of a sacred place—
 A sadness of celestial grace—
 A shadow, God-inhabited.

IX

And all is peace, around, above,
 The air all balm—the light all love—
 Enduring love, that burns and broods
 Serenely o'er these solitudes;
 Or pours at intervals a part
 Of Heaven upon the wanderer's heart,
 Whose subject soul and quiet thought
 Are open to be touched, or taught,
 By mute address of bud and beam,
 Of purple peak and silver stream—
 By sounds that fall at Nature's choice,
 And things whose being is their voice,
 Innumerable tongues that teach
 The will and ways of God to men,
 In waves that beat the lonely beach,
 And winds that haunt the homeless glen,
 Where they, who ruled the rushing deep,
 The restless and the brave,
 Have left along their native steep
 The ruin and the grave.

X

And he who gazes while the day
 Departs along the boundless bay,
 May find against its fading streak
 The shadow of a single peak,
 Seen only when the surges smile,
 And all the heaven is clear,
 That sad and solitary isle,¹
 Where, captive, from his red career,
 He sank—who shook the hemisphere;

¹ Elba, which is said to be visible from most of the elevated points of this coast. From the citadel of Genoa I have seen what was asserted to be Elba. I believe it to have been Corsica.

Then, turning from the hollow sea,
May trace, across the crimsoned height
That saw his earliest victory,
The purple rainbow's resting light,
And the last lines of storm that fade
Within the peaceful evening shade.

THE LAMP OF MEMORY

AMONG the hours of his life to which the writer looks back with peculiar gratitude, as having been marked by more than ordinary fulness of joy or clearness of teaching, is one passed, now some years ago, near time of sunset, among the broken masses of pine forest which skirt the course of the Ain, above the village of Champagnole, in the Jura. It is a spot which has all the solemnity, with none of the savageness, of the Alps; where there is a sense of a great power beginning to be manifested in the earth, and of a deep and majestic concord in the rise of the long low lines of piny hills; the first utterance of those mighty mountain symphonies, soon to be more loudly lifted and wildly broken along the battlements of the Alps. But their strength is as yet restrained; and the far-reaching ridges of pastoral mountain succeed each other, like the long and sighing swell which moves over quiet waters from some far off stormy sea. And there is a deep tenderness pervading that vast monotony. The destructive forces and the stern expression of the central ranges are alike withdrawn. No frost-ploughed, dust-encumbered paths of ancient glacier fret the soft Jura pastures; no splintered heaps of ruin break the fair ranks of her forests; no pale, defiled, or furious rivers rend their rude and changeful ways among her rocks. Patiently, eddy by eddy, the clear green streams wind along their well-known beds; and under the dark quietness of the undisturbed pines, there spring up, year by year, such company of joyful flowers as I know not the like of among all the blessings of the earth. It was spring time, too; and all were coming forth in clusters crowded for very love; there was room enough for all, but they crushed their leaves into all manner of strange shapes only to be nearer each other.

There was the wood anemone, star after star, closing every now and then into *nebulæ*; and there was the oxalis, troop by troop, like virginal processions of the *Mois de Marie*, the dark vertical clefts in the limestone choked up with them as with heavy snow, and touched with ivy on the edges—ivy as light and lovely as the vine; and, ever and anon, a blue gush of violets, and cowslip bells in sunny places; and in the more open ground, the vetch, and comfrey, and mezereon, and the small sapphire buds of the *Polygala Alpina*, and the wild strawberry, just a blossom or two, all showered amidst the golden softness of deep, warm, amber-coloured moss. I came out presently on the edge of the ravine: the solemn murmur of its waters rose suddenly from beneath, mixed with the singing of the thrushes among the pine boughs; and, on the opposite side of the valley, walled all along as it was by grey cliffs of limestone, there was a hawk sailing slowly off their brow, touching them nearly with his wings, and with the shadows of the pines flickering upon its plumage from above; but with a fall of a hundred fathoms under his breast, and the curling pools of the green river gliding and glittering dizzily beneath him, their foam globes moving with him as he flew. It would be difficult to conceive a scene less dependent upon any other interest than that of its own secluded and serious beauty; but the writer well remembers the sudden blankness and chill which were cast upon it when he endeavoured, in order more strictly to arrive at the sources of its impressiveness, to imagine it, for a moment, a scene in some aboriginal forest of the New Continent. The flowers in an instant lost their light, the river its music; the hills became oppressively desolate; a heaviness in the boughs of the darkened forest showed how much of their former power had been dependent upon a life which was not theirs, how much of the glory of the imperishable, or continually renewed, creation is reflected from things more precious in their memories than it, in its renewing. Those ever springing flowers, and ever flowing streams had been dyed by the deep colours of human endurance, valour, and virtue; and the crests of the sable hills that rose against the evening sky received a deeper worship, because their far shadows fell eastward over the iron wall of Joux, and the four-square keep of Granson.

THE VIRTUES OF ARCHITECTURE

THE first question will of course be, What are the possible Virtues of architecture?

In the main, we require from buildings, as from men, two kinds of goodness: first, the doing their practical duty well: then that they be graceful and pleasing in doing it; which last is itself another form of duty.

Then the practical duty divides itself into two branches,—acting and talking:—acting, as to defend us from weather or violence; talking, as the duty of monuments or tombs, to record facts and express feelings; or of churches, temples, public edifices, treated as books of history, to tell such history clearly and forcibly.

We have thus, altogether, three great branches of architectural virtue, and we require of any building,—

1. That it act well, and do the things it was intended to do in the best way.
2. That it speak well, and say the things it was intended to say in the best words.
3. That it look well, and please us by its presence, whatever it has to do or say.

Now, as regards the second of these virtues, it is evident that we can establish no general laws. First, because it is not a virtue required in all buildings; there are some which are only for covert or defence, and from which we ask no conversation. Secondly, because there are countless methods of expression, some conventional, some natural: each conventional mode has its own alphabet, which evidently can be no subject of general laws. Every natural mode is instinctively employed and instinctively understood, wherever there is true feeling; and this instinct is above law. The choice of conventional methods depends on circumstances out of calculation, and that of natural methods on sensations out of control; so that we can only say that the choice is right, when we feel that the means are effective; and we cannot always say that it is wrong when they are not so.

A building which recorded the Bible history by means of

a series of sculptural pictures, would be perfectly useless to a person unacquainted with the Bible beforehand; on the other hand, the text of the Old and New Testaments might be written on its walls, and yet the building be a very inconvenient kind of book, not so useful as if it had been adorned with intelligible and vivid sculpture. So, again, the power of exciting emotion must vary or vanish, as the spectator becomes thoughtless or cold; and the building may be often blamed for what is the fault of its critic, or endowed with a charm which is of its spectator's creation. It is not, therefore, possible to make expressional character any fair criterion of excellence in buildings, until we can fully place ourselves in the position of those to whom their expression was originally addressed, and until we are certain that we understand every symbol, and are capable of being touched by every association which its builders employed as letters of their language. I shall continually endeavour to put the reader into such sympathetic temper, when I ask for his judgment of a building; and in every work I may bring before him I shall point out, as far as I am able, whatever is peculiar in its expression; nay, I must even depend on such peculiarities for much of my best evidence respecting the character of the builders. But I cannot legalise the judgment for which I plead, nor insist upon it if it be refused. I can neither force the reader to feel this architectural rhetoric, nor compel him to confess that the rhetoric is powerful, if it have produced no impression on his own mind.

I leave, therefore, the expression of buildings for incidental notice only. But their other two virtues are proper subjects of law,—their performance of their common and necessary work, and their conformity with universal and divine canons of loveliness: respecting these there can be no doubt, no ambiguity. I would have the reader discern them so quickly that, as he passes along a street, he may, by a glance of the eye, distinguish the noble from the ignoble work. He can do this, if he permit free play to his natural instincts; and all that I have to do for him is to remove from those instincts the artificial restraints which prevent their action, and to encourage them to an unaffected and unbiassed choice between right and wrong.

We have, then, two qualities of buildings for subjects of separate inquiry: their action, and aspect, and the sources of virtue in both; that is to say, Strength and Beauty, both of these being less admired in themselves, than as testifying the intelligence or imagination of the builder.

For we have a worthier way of looking at human than at divine architecture: much of the value both of construction and decoration, in the edifices of men, depends upon our being led by the thing produced or adorned, to some contemplation of the powers of mind concerned in its creation or adornment. We are not so led by divine work, but are content to rest in the contemplation of the thing created. I wish the reader to note this especially; we take pleasure, or *should* take pleasure, in architectural construction altogether as the manifestation of an admirable human intelligence; it is not the strength, not the size, not the finish of the work which we are to venerate: rocks are always stronger, mountains always larger, all natural objects more finished; but it is the intelligence and resolution of man in overcoming physical difficulty which are to be the source of our pleasure and subject of our praise. And again, in decoration or beauty, it is less the actual loveliness of the thing produced, than the choice and invention concerned in the production, which are to delight us; the love and the thoughts of the workman more than his work: his work must always be imperfect, but his thoughts and affections may be true and deep.

This origin of our pleasure in architecture I must insist upon at somewhat greater length, for I would fain do away with some of the ungrateful coldness which we show towards the good builders of old time. In no art is there closer connection between our delight in the work, and our admiration of the workman's mind, than in architecture, and yet we rarely ask for a builder's name. The patron at whose cost, the monk through whose dreaming, the foundation was laid, we remember occasionally; never the man who verily did the work. Did the reader ever hear of William of Sens as having had anything to do with Canterbury Cathedral? or of Pietro Basegio as in anywise connected with the Ducal Palace of Venice? There is much ingratitude and injustice in this; and therefore I desire my reader to observe carefully

how much of his pleasure in building is derived, or should be derived, from admiration of the intellect of men whose names he knows not.

The two virtues of architecture which we can justly weigh, are, we said, its strength or good construction, and its beauty or good decoration. Consider first, therefore, what you mean when you say a building is well constructed or well built; you do not merely mean that it answers its purpose,—this is much, and many modern buildings fail of this much; but if it be verily well built, it must answer this purpose in the simplest way, and with no over-expenditure of means. We require of a light-house, for instance, that it shall stand firm and carry a light; if it do not this, assuredly it has been ill built; but it may do it to the end of time, and yet not be well built. It may have hundreds of tons of stone in it more than were needed, and have cost thousands of pounds more than it ought. To pronounce it well or ill built, we must know the utmost forces it can have to resist, and the best arrangements of stone for encountering them, and the quickest ways of effecting such arrangements: then only, so far as such arrangements have been chosen, and such methods used, is it well built. Then the knowledge of all difficulties to be met, and of all means of meeting them, and the quick and true fancy or invention of the modes of applying the means to the end, are what we have to admire in the builder, even as he is seen through this first or inferior part of his work. Mental power, observe: not muscular, nor mechanical, nor technical, nor empirical,—pure, precious, majestic, massy intellect; not to be had at vulgar price, nor received without thanks, and without asking from whom.

Suppose, for instance, we are present at the building of a bridge: the bricklayers or masons have had their centering erected for them, and that centering was put together by a carpenter, who had the line of its curve traced for him by the architect: the masons are dexterously handling and fitting their bricks, or, by the help of machinery, carefully adjusting stones which are numbered for their places. There is probably in their quickness of eye and readiness of hand something admirable; but this is not what I ask the reader to admire: not the carpentering, nor the bricklaying, nor

anything that he can presently see and understand, but the choice of the curve, and the shaping of the numbered stones, and the appointment of that number; there were many things to be known and thought upon before these were decided. The man who chose the curve and numbered the stones, had to know the times and tides of the river, and the strength of its floods, and the height and flow of them, and the soil of the banks, and the endurance of it, and the weight of the stones he had to build with, and the kind of traffic that day by day would be carried on over his bridge,—all this specially, and all the great general laws of force and weight, and their working; and in the choice of the curve and numbering of stones are expressed not only his knowledge of these, but such ingenuity and firmness as he had, in applying special means to overcome the special difficulties about his bridge. There is no saying how much wit, how much depth of thought, how much fancy, presence of mind, courage, and fixed resolution there may have gone to the placing of a single stone of it. This is what we have to admire—this grand power and heart of man in the thing; not his technical or empirical way of holding the trowel and laying mortar.

GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE

A PICTURE or poem is often little more than a feeble utterance of man's admiration of something out of himself; but architecture approaches more to a creation of his own, born of his necessities, and expressive of his nature. It is also, in some sort, the work of the whole race, while the picture or statue are the work of one only, in most cases more highly gifted than his fellows. And therefore we may expect that the first two elements of good architecture should be expressive of some great truths commonly belonging to the whole race, and necessary to be understood or felt by them in all their work that they do under the sun. And observe what they are: the confession of Imperfection, and the confession of Desire of Change. The building of the bird and the bee needs not express anything like this.

It is perfect and unchanging. But just because we are something better than birds or bees, our building must confess that we have not reached the perfection we can imagine, and cannot rest in the condition we have attained. If we pretend to have reached either perfection or satisfaction, we have degraded ourselves and our work. God's work only may express that; but ours may never have that sentence written upon it,—“And behold, it was very good.” And, observe again, it is not merely as it renders the edifice a book of various knowledge, or a mine of precious thought, that variety is essential to its nobleness. The vital principle is not the love of *Knowledge*, but the love of *Change*. It is that strange *disquietude* of the Gothic spirit that is its greatness; that restlessness of the dreaming mind, that wanders hither and thither among the niches, and flickers feverishly around the pinnacles, and frets and fades in labyrinthine knots and shadows along wall and roof, and yet is not satisfied, nor shall be satisfied. The Greek could stay in his triglyph furrow, and be at peace; but the work of the Gothic heart is fretwork still, and it can neither rest in, nor from, its labour, but must pass on, sleeplessly, until its love of change shall be pacified for ever in the change that must come alike on them that wake and them that sleep.

THE MOUNTAIN SUNSET

BLUE, and baseless, and beautiful

Did the boundless mountains bear

Their folded shadows in to the golden air.

The comfortlessness of their chasms was full

Of orient cloud and undulating mist,

Which, where their silver cataracts hissed,

Quivered with panting colour. Far above

A lightning pulse of soundless fire did move

In the blue heaven itself, and, snake-like, slid

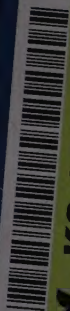
Round peak, and precipice, and pyramid;

White lines of light along their crags alit,

And the cold lips of their chasms were wreathed with it,

Until they smiled with passionate fire; the sky
Hung over them with answering ecstasy:
Through its pale veins of cloud, like blushing blood,
From south to north the swift pulsation glowed
With infinite emotion; but it ceased

In the far chambers of the dewy west.
There the weak day stood withering, like a spirit
Which, in its dim departure, turns to bless
Their sorrow whom it leaveth to inherit
Their lonely lot of night and nothingness.



KS-080-636